THE OFFICIAL SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE



SEGA No.1 FOR SATURN

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JULY 96



The ultimate blast 'em up returns – and it's twice as good as the original!

VIRTUA COP 2

E3 SHOW INSIDE!

SATURN INTERNET CONNECTION

SOVIET STRIKE

EXHUMED

VIRTUA FIGHTER KIDS

SONIC X-TREME

Takes 3D gaming to the limits! We talk to the creator!



UNVEILED!

The Saturn's new 3D controller! See page 59!

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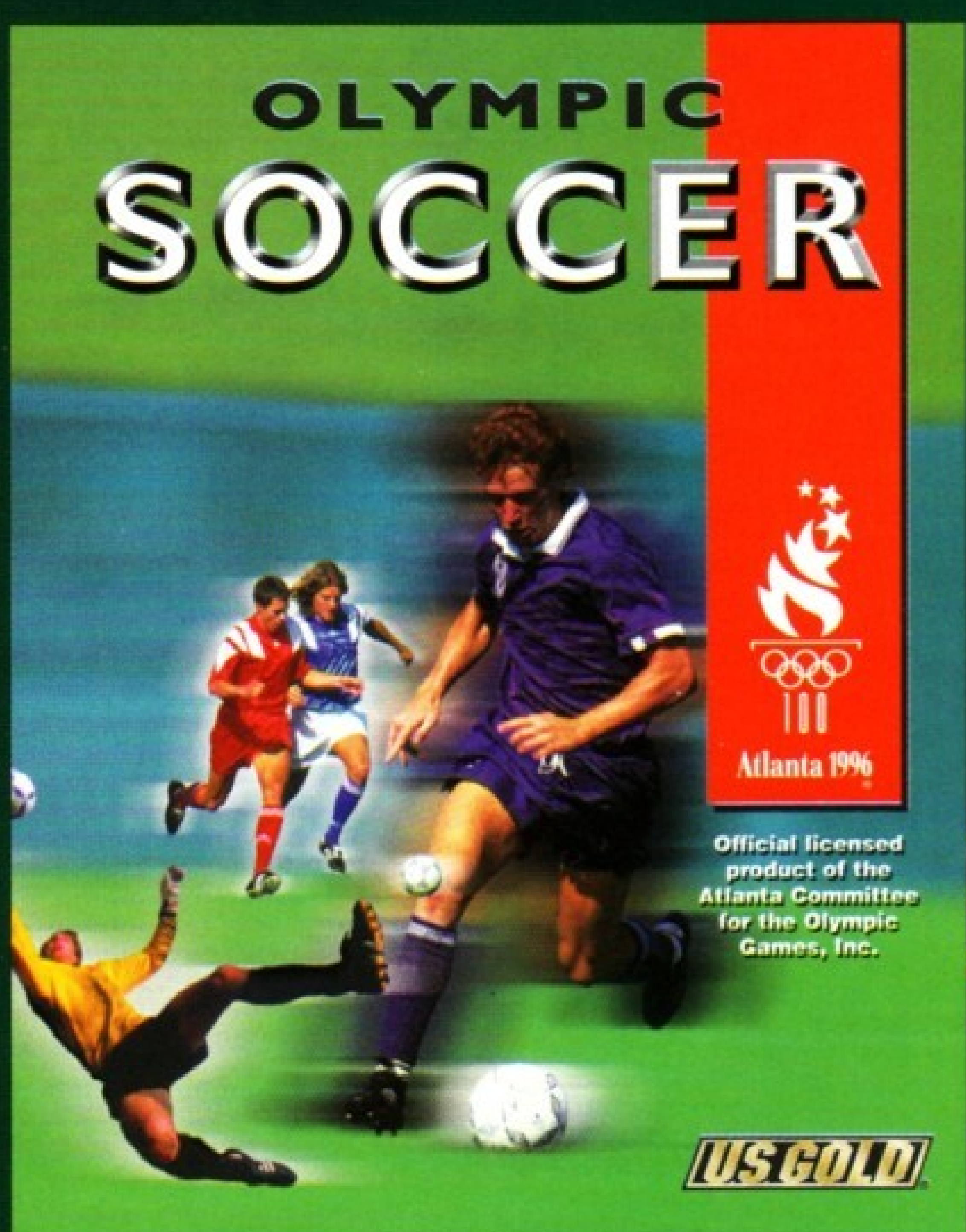
PLUS! BUG TOO DUKE NUKEM 3D OVERKILL SPACE HULK MICRO MACHINES AND MORE!

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SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

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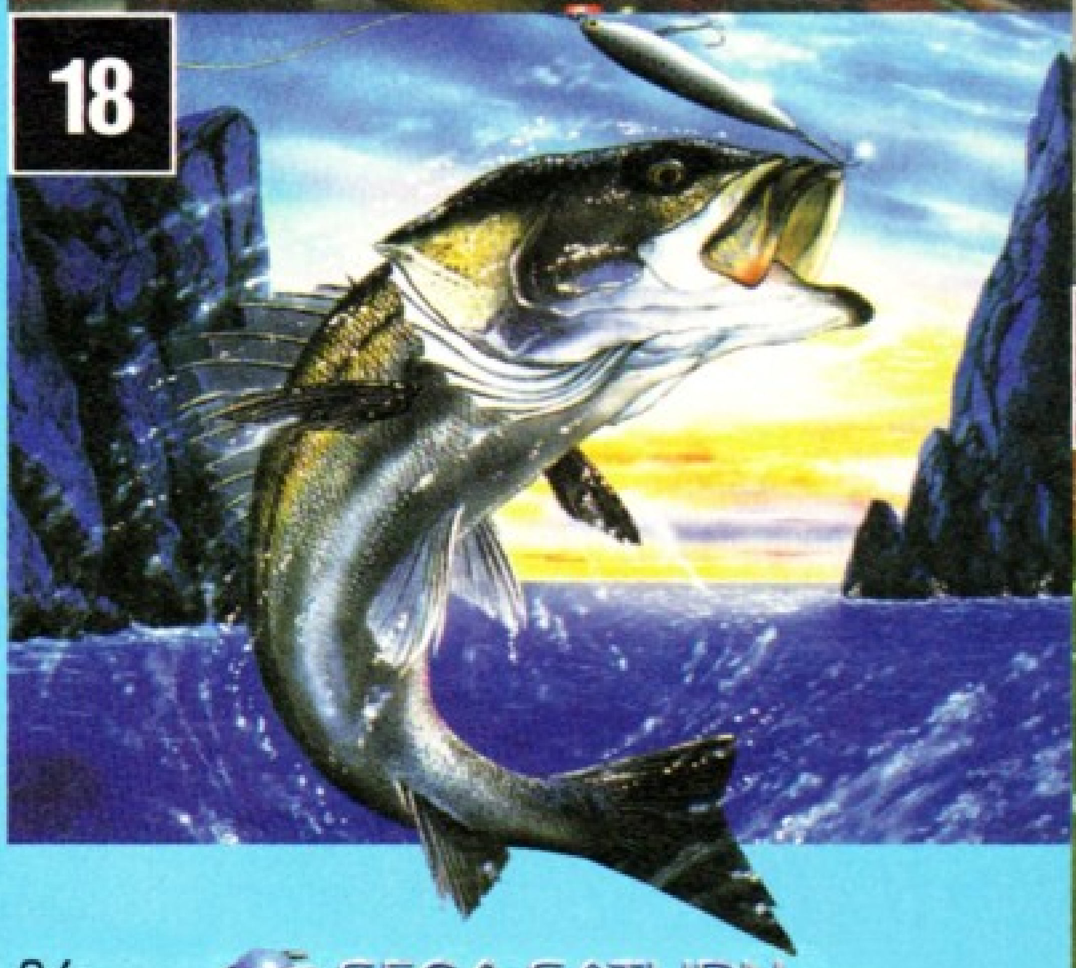
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SEGA SATURN NEWS

THE BIGGEST SHOW IN THE WORLD...EVER!

What can I say? I've just returned from the E3 show in Los Angeles, the biggest video games exhibition in the entire world and the sheer volume of new Saturn games on offer was incredible! I got to see the first Saturn versions of Virtua Cop 2, VF Kids and Sonic X-treme, plus the technically astounding VF3 (which drew huge crowds throughout the show), the Saturn internet connection kit and tons of other new titles, which you'll be able to read about further in the issue. Probably the most exciting announcement made at the show was that the Saturn's price is dropping yet again to just £199. Believe me, this Christmas' video games war is going to be very interesting indeed! In the meantime though, just take a look at all the brilliant new stuff in the issue!



Sam Hickman, Editor

SONIC IS BACK!



Yep, as reported in our last issue, Sonic is about to make a comeback of gigantic proportions! Scheduled for a Christmas release, Sonic X-treme is already up and running and true to previous Sonic releases is looking absolutely great! To celebrate his born-again fame, Sonic held his very own party in Los Angeles at theme bar, the House of Blues. Despite Tails' absence, all the other Sega big wigs were there including members of AM2, and both Sega America and Sega Europe heads. Sonic helped dole out golden rings and Sonic tattoos to the partygoers and Sega's American CEO Tom Kalinske kick started the proceedings by performing a blues-brother-esque dance (complete with hat and dark glasses) and making an extravagant speech to frenzied American partygoers (cue excited yelps of "Way to go, Tom!" Yaaaay, Sega!" and "We love Sooonnniccc!" from the entranced audience).

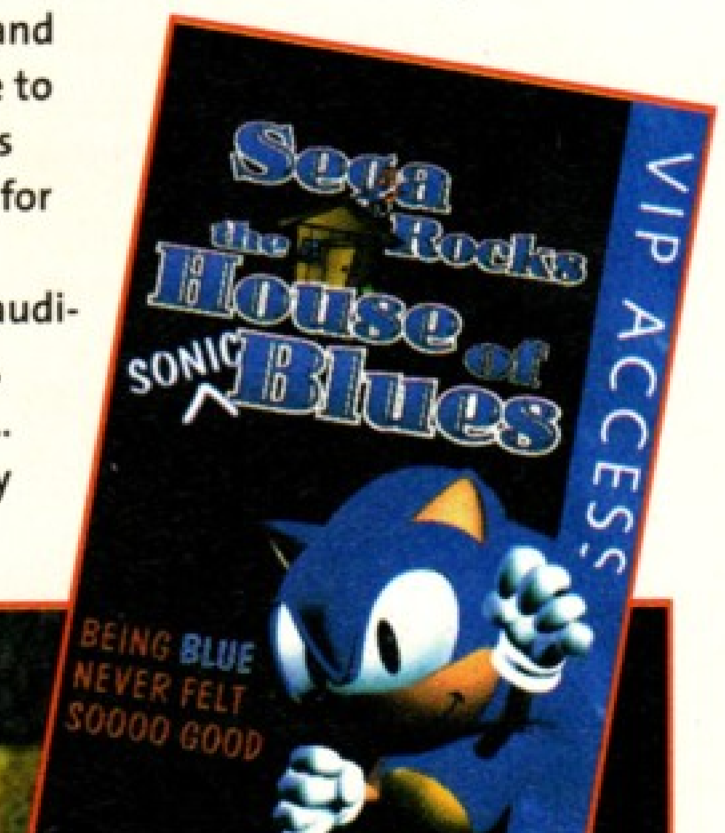
Kalinske made many claims throughout the evening, but it was clear to audiences that Sega's mission statement proved that 1996 will be an aggressive year for them. Kalinske announced, "We want to be the leader in the world of interactive entertainment in and out of the home. We are going to win the hi-tec console war by this Christmas both here in the US and abroad. In the future we will have a Sega product in every home. We will sell more than 1.5 million units this year to bring the domestic base to over 2.1 million units ... this means 32 bit Saturn sales are on a faster track than 16-bit was when we first introduced it in 1990!



He then went on to talk about the Saturn's internet connection kit, something Sega clearly have high hopes for. "This truly could be considered as the infamous under $500 computer everyone's talking about. A key reason why Saturn will win the advanced technology platform war." Apparently network games are already in development for the netlink, with around ten games being made available by Christmas. Developers already signed up are GT, Westwood studios, Interplay and Accolade.

Kalinske then went on to talk about the software that will be available for Saturn this year, and once again set a high standard for the machine's games. "Frankly the software you'll see on Saturn this fall for Sega and the third party community will blow away anything on Playstation because we are all learning how to work the Saturn's CPUs and developmental kit." And in reference to NiGHTS, he commented,"Naka san has done it again! We think NiGHTS will do for Saturn what Sonic did for Genesis."

He concluded his speech by giving the audience a sneak peek into the future by revealing, "I'd like to show you what's coming on Saturn... it's Virtua Fighter 3! You won't get that on Sony or Nintendo."



EVE OF THE E3 SHOW

Sega announce that their competitively priced machine ($249) combined with the best games will win them the console war this Christmas.



*For more Sonic news turn to our special Sonic feature on page 32.





SEGA TEEVEE!

As part of their world domination plan, Sega have also unveiled a new trade trailer of Sonic X-treme for broadcast in the US. The ad features none other than a very disgruntled Mario taking a look at the new Sonic game and becoming very exasperated indeed at the general quality and 3D-ness of the proceedings. Luigi calls him an "idiot" and wonders just how Mario ever got himself into games in the first place! The ad then focuses on the mock Mario's face as he pronounces "Sega scream" in a very meek voice. Don't expect to see this ad over here though – Sega Europe have their own plans this autumn.

HOW THE PRICE WAS DECIDED

The Sony Playstation's price drop came as a surprise to everyone at the show, although Sega had heard rumours before the show that this could happen. A cross-continental meeting was immediately set up via telephone between Sega America representatives and Sega Japan, and the final announcement of a $199 Saturn was made at 6am American time on Friday, the second day of the show. A spokesman for Sega's Tom Kalinske commented, "This pricing action has always been part of our overall strategic plan". Angela Edwards, Sega's manager of Public Relations said, " The bottom line is we don't want the price point to determine the game player's choice of a system. Let's don't play penny games. We want consumers to know it's the game that determines which system is better and nothing else matters."

Luckily, the decision was undertaken by Sega Europe to follow in the US's footsteps and bring a £199 pricepoint to the UK too, meaning that the machine has now broken through the "magical" £200 price point that most retailers believe is needed for the machine to go mass market. To us, it seems impossible that either of the machines will drop again in price, so from now on, at least the console war will be fought on an even footing – with the focus being more on what really matters – the games!

VF3 WOWS THE PUNTERS!

One of the most exciting attractions at the show was the unveiling of Virtua Fighter 3 on the Sega stand. This was the first time that anyone had seen the demo outside of Japan, and it attracted huge crowds throughout the three days of the show. In fact, Sony had rigged up a huge video wall to show off their wares, which was placed almost parallel to the VF3 screen, and everyone in the crowd turned their backs on it to watch VF3 instead on a screen that was around fifteen times smaller!

The demo was running off an actual Model 3 board and scrolled through several of the characters, including Jeffry, Pai, Lau, Jacky and the new character Aoi. Almost everyone who saw the demo said it was the most amazing thing they had seen at the show, and some of the effects on the characters were absolutely breathtaking. For instance, the movement on Aoi as she performed a traditional Japanese dance was completely fluid and was topped off by realistic facial movements and a costume that flowed and moved with the character, rather than looking like "cardboard" clothes. As for the other characters, their movements were incredibly fast and the detail is much more intricate than in the last two versions.

At the time of writing, there were no playable versions of the game up and running, but it is thought that the first playable version should be unveiled by AM2 within the next few months. However, playable or not, the demo proves just how powerful the Model 3 board is – if people were astounded by this demo, imagine what they'll be like when the final version arrives!







STOP PRESS!

At Sega's house of blues party, Tom Kalinske announced that Virtua Fighter 3 will be coming to the Saturn! He didn't give a precise release date (and who could blame him seeing as the Coin-op version isn't even finished yet) but it's thought that it may arrive in the early months of 1997. More news as and when!

SEE THE WORLD!

As predicted by SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE some months ago, the internet connection facility for the Saturn was finally unveiled at the E3 show! The Sega Saturn Net Link, a modem and browser peripheral brings the internet to the Saturn and allows you to get on-line via the TV. This means that when the peripheral is launched, every Saturn owner will have the chance to use the world wide web service, email and they'll also be able to play specially created network games (among them Baku Baku Animal and the rumour of Command and Conquer).

The actual peripheral is a 28.8bps speed modem, combining a net browser, which will go on sale in the States this autumn for $199. A UK release date is yet to be confirmed.

The actual package plugs into the cartridge port of the Saturn, and included in the package is CD-based HTML software that allows the Saturn to access internet sites. At the moment, the add-on will be able to utilise a standard PC board via the use of an adaptor, although Sega will be bringing out their own keyboard and mouse shortly after the peripheral is launched. For those without the access to a PC board, Sega have created a virtual keyboard and a space magnifying function so that users will be able to send email and look at information on screen at the size they require, rather than having to squint at tiny text on a screen.

When buyers decide to go on line they will receive one month's worth of free service, then in subsequent months, the fee will be from $19.95 every month.

There were plenty of chances to test the peripheral out at the show, and information retrieval was fairly fast, but more than that, it was really easy to use. In fact, the only problem we can see with the system at all, is that due to the Saturn's memory capabilities, it will be nigh on impossible to store information, although there are rumours that Sega are developing a disk drive for use with the peripheral. Other than that, a spokesman for Sega at the show said that they were also utilising a "bookmark" system whereby users can return to the information they require as soon as they're on the net, which again, would go someday to solving the "memory" problem. Anyway, as we said, there's no release date planned for this one in the UK at the moment, but Sega are hoping to get it on sale before Christmas of this year, at a price to be confirmed.

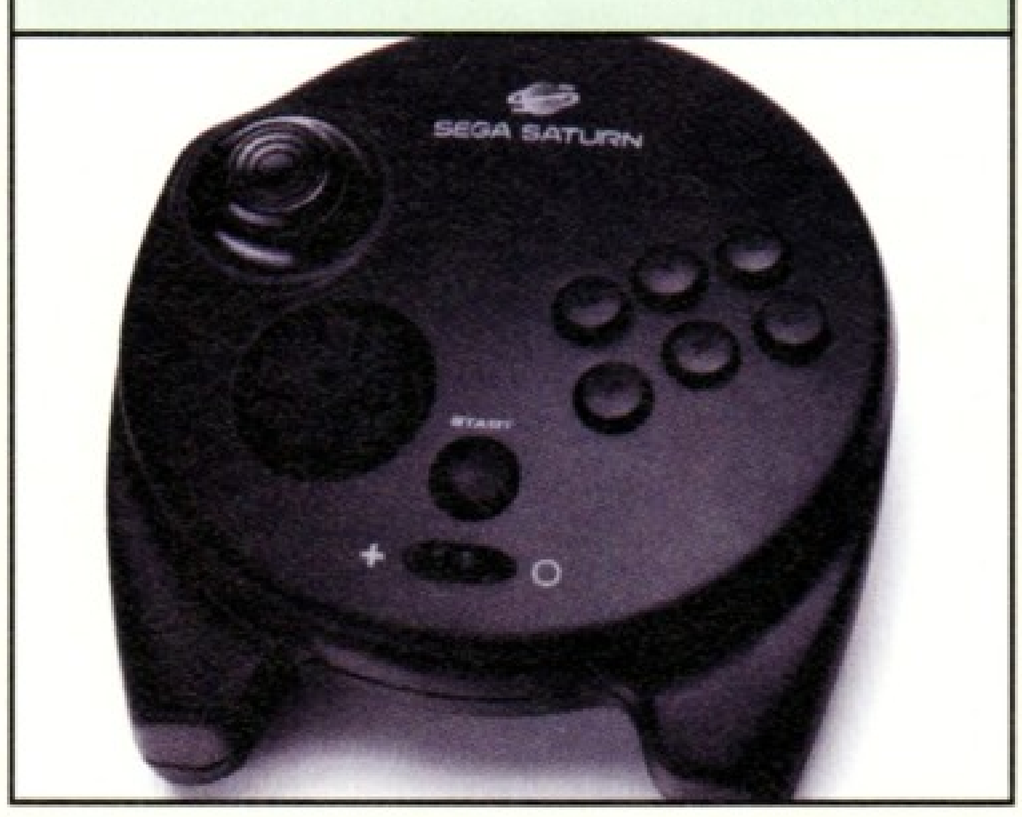






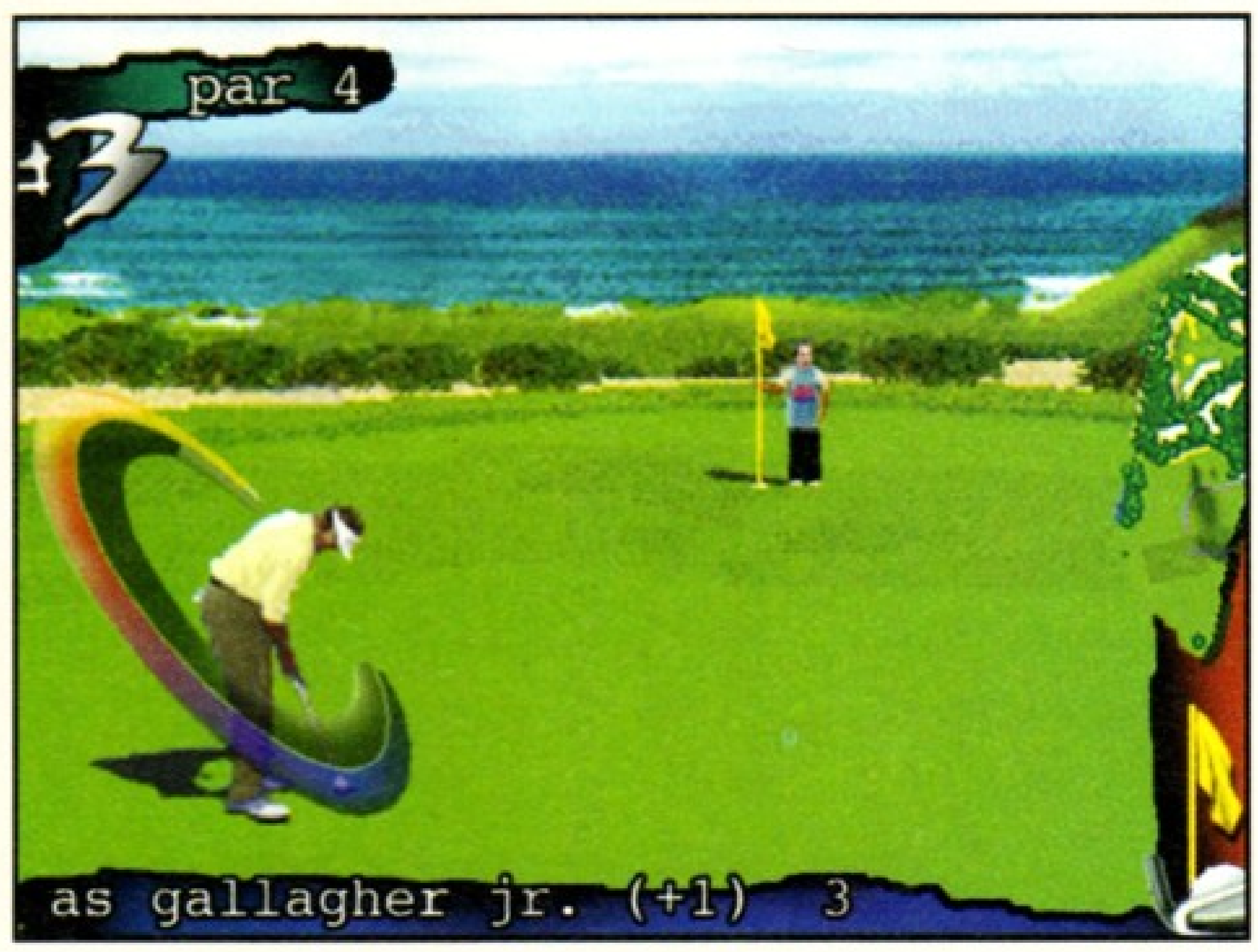
NEW CONTROLLER UNVEILED

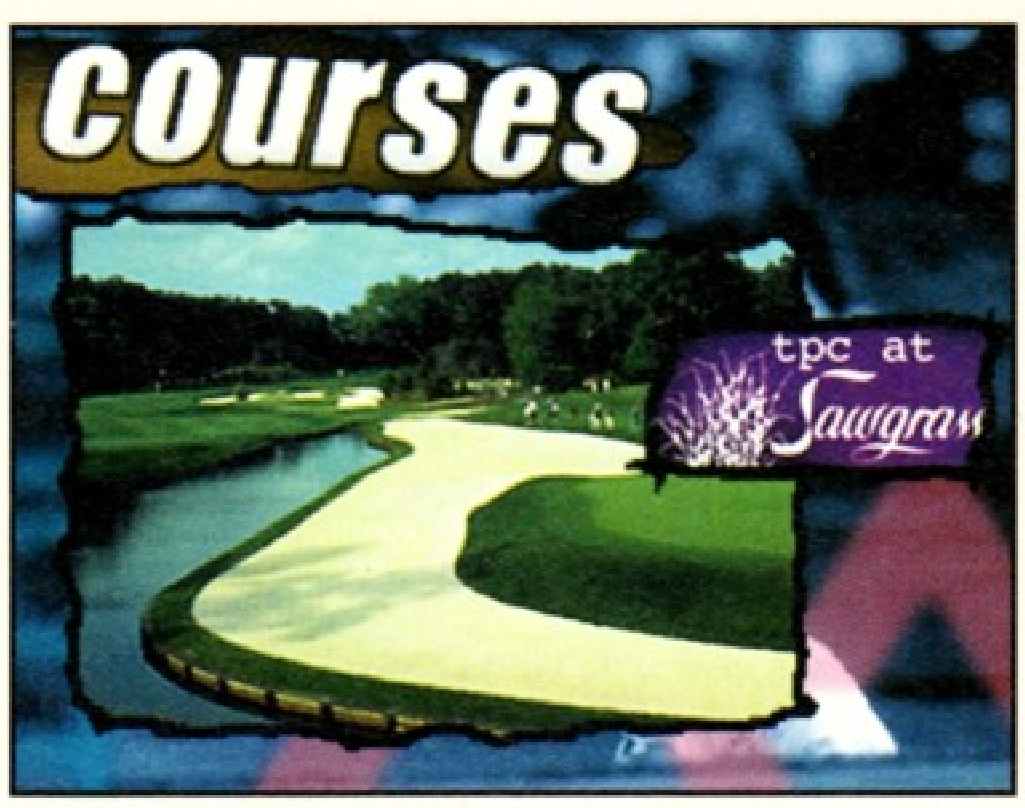
Revealed at the show was a new analogue joypad, specifically designed for use with 3D games. The as yet untitled controller features the usual directional pad plus six buttons, but also has a rollerball d-pad placed above the usual d-pad. This makes it much easier to play 3D games such as NiGHTS and the forthcoming Sonic X-treme, and after the initial minutes that it takes to get used to the control system, it proves to be a completely natural way to play any 3D game. It's likely that the pad will go on sale at the same time as the UK version of NiGHTS – which with any luck should be September 5.

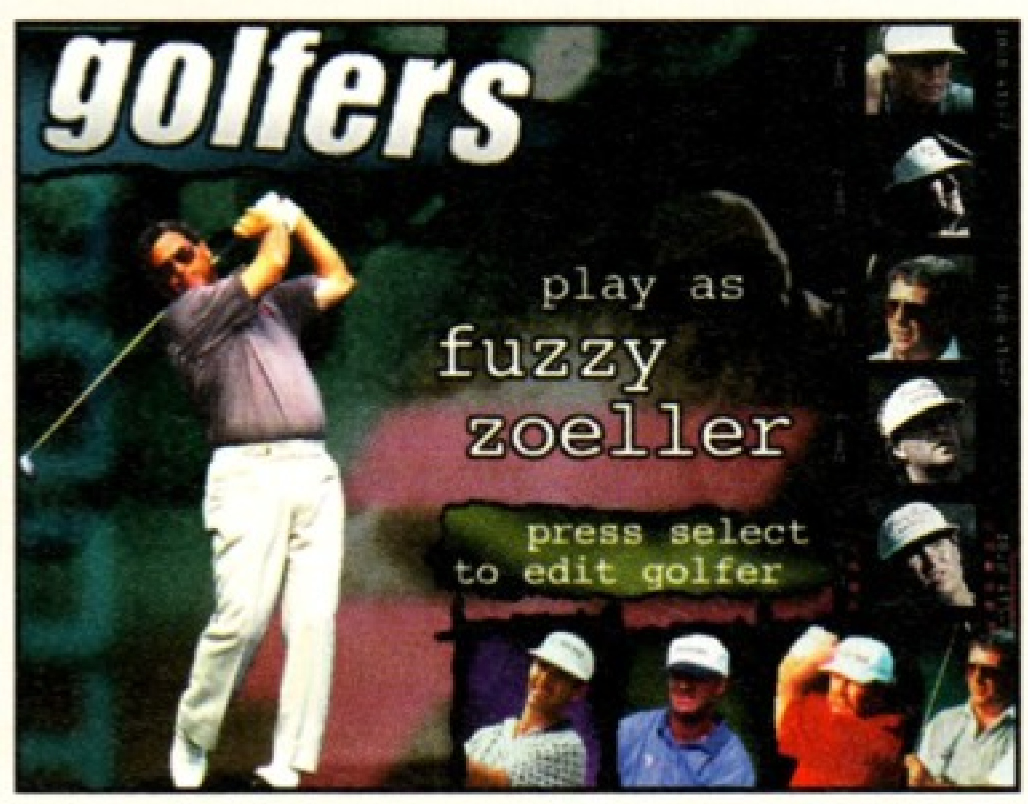


GOLF ANYONE

Saturn owners missed out on last year's conversion of PGA, as at the time EA weren't converting titles for the Saturn. But luckily, golf fans will have no cause for concern this year as the legendary PGA will be making its way to Saturn in the closing months of this year. Yep, so it's goodbye to all those cacky golf sims that you've had to put up with in the last year, and hello to a top quality game (hopefully). Anyway, it seems that people were a bit disappointed with last year's PGA, so the engine has been overhauled for this game too, so you can expect to see something a bit different this time.









BUBSY GETS ON THE BANDWAGON!

If you were an avid Megadrive fan, you'll probably remember Bubsy – he appeared in two platform games a couple of years back and enjoyed minor success son most 16-bit systems. Well, anyway, he's back and as is something of a prequirement in these days of 32bit gaming, he's in his very own 3D game. Yep, although the main sprite looks exactly the same as he did in the Megadrive titles, the game has changed incredibly, with all of the action taking place in a 3D environment.

At the moment, the game is still in the very early stages of development, but there was a playable version up and running at the show – the character runs around a series of flatly coloured environments, jumping on enemies and picking up bonuses – much in the same way as Bug, although it has to be said that Bubsy is in no way comparable to Segasoft's game at this moment.

Anyway, with a lot of development time still left to go, it's quite possible that Accolade will turn out a good product by the time the game's ready for release, but with titles such as sonic on the way and as Accolade don't actually have a UK office, it will probably be released through Warner this Autumn.





BUG'S BACK FOR MORE!

Another of Sega's high profile projects unveiled at the show was Bug Too!, the sequel to Sega's hugely popular platform game, Bug! We managed to catch up with Bug's producer, Steve Apour, and he informed us that there will be more emphasis on 3D play than in the last game and that they were also looking into the difficulty of the original title – and thinking of changing it for the sequel. We managed to get a quick playtest of the game, and true to their word, the developers down at Segasoft have certainly made more use of 3D, and the graphics look much more tidy too.

In this sequel there's a choice of three different playable characters – in addition to the original Bug! character, there's a seventies big hair loon type by the name of Superfly and there's a little maggot dog too. They all have different strengths and weaknesses as you'd expect, although you don't have to choose a particular character to get through a specific level.

Anyway, Bug Too! is loads more in-depth than the first game, and looks pretty stunning graphically, even though the title is barely more than 20% complete. In fact,it's not even due out over here until around December, so it's likely that coverage on this one won't begin until later in the year.

DAY ONE OF E3

Sony hold a press conference, and announce they are slashing the price of Playstation hardware from $299 and £299 to $199 and £199 in the UK.

SCAVENGER STYLE

Once again, Scavenger proved a force to be reckoned with, showing off a whole bunch of titles – all of them Saturn bound over the next year. Amok and Scorcher are still yet to be finished, although both should be out by summer, but it seems that Scavenger have even more impressive stuff on the way. Probably the most stunning title on offer was Into the Shadows, a 3D slash 'em up adventure (not Doom style) with huge sprites and a very dark feel to the proceedings. A playable version was up and running at the show and proved to be incredibly smooth and pretty fast too. A running demo is also apparently available on Scavenger's web site, so if anyone's on line they can get a sneak preview of things to come.

Also on show was Tarantula, a game which obviously features a giant spider as its main attraction. Again, huge sprites were displayed and the motion of the arachnid was very realistic indeed. A small demo was playable which allowed you to test out the spider's pouncing motions as well as exploring the environments, and although plenty of other developers also seemed to be using spiders in their games, Scavenger's effort was easily the most impressive.

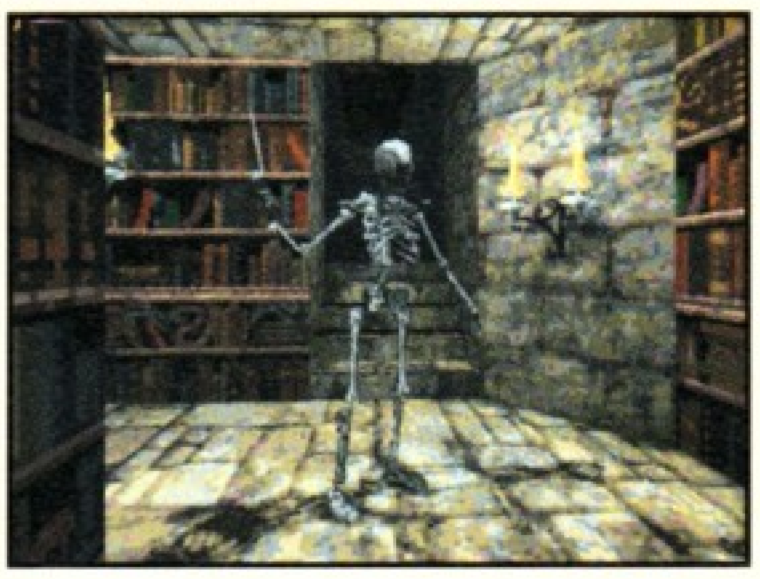
Terminus and Aqua were the other products on show, the former was a rolling demo of a bondage-clad woman in yet another dark setting – looking pretty good even though it's an early version. The latter is quite difficult to define at the moment, but is set underwater and features some amazing translucent effects. We should be able to get hold of more information on both of these products within the next month.











RULE THE WORLD!

Displayed on both the Virgin and the Sega stands, was the very first version of Command and Conquer on the Saturn. As anyone with a PC will no doubt already know, this was the biggest selling game in Europe in 1996, and has won numerous awards (not to mention a bit of controversy over its notorious ad campaign) for its in-depth gameplay.

The game is strategy-based, with the aim being to conquer lands with the help of your expert army. After building up your manpower, you can assign them certain tasks which they'll then carry out right down to the last order, using various weapons to get the job done. There's plenty of cut scenes to spice the action up and you can play either against other people or against the computer – opponents will also be attempting to claim the land as their own. Anyway, it's' all a bit like Risk if anyone has heard of that, except that the action is much updated and loads quicker.

There's rumours that this will be among the first batch of games to utilise the Saturn's Netlink and it this is true, it could easily make this one of the best selling Saturn games of the year. Next month we should be able to get our hands on a playable version, and with any luck we'll be bringing you a showcase on the game.







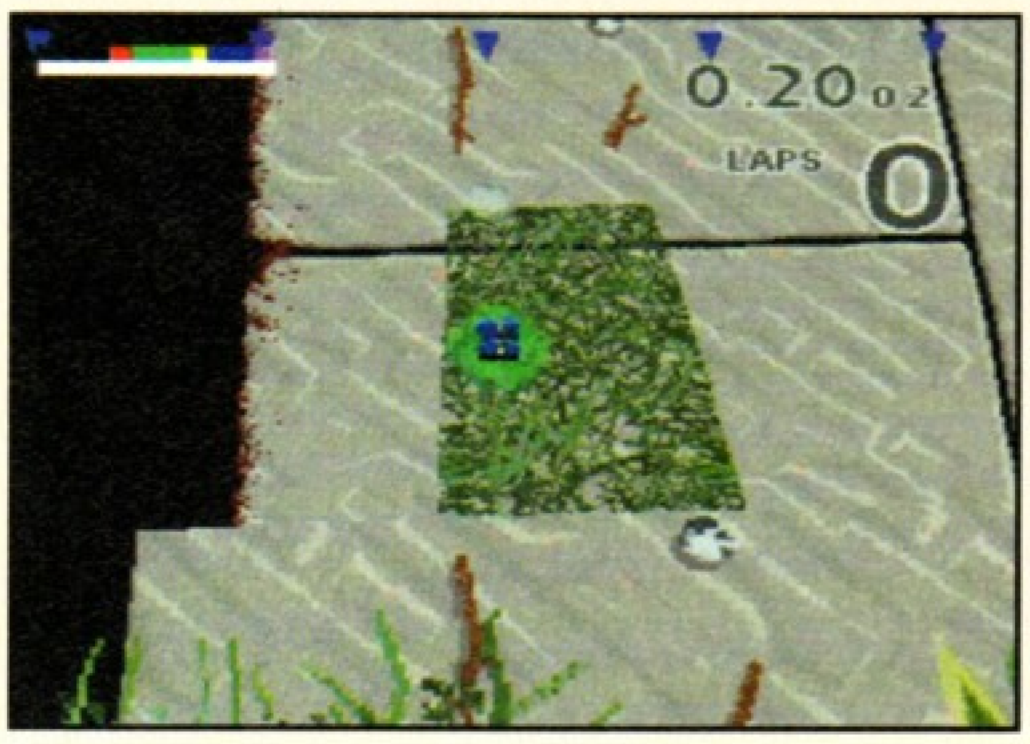


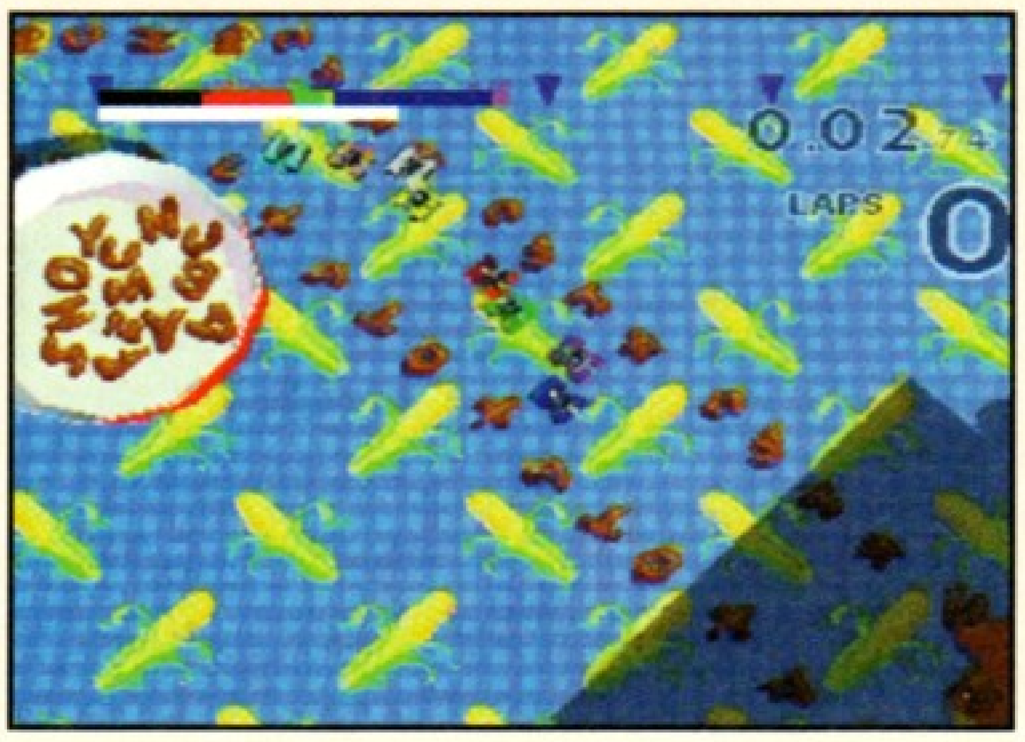
MICRO MACHINES RETURNS!

Top Megadrive developers Codemasters signed a deal with Sega (just before the E3 show) which allows them to publish all their top titles on the Saturn! At the moment, it seems as though Micro Machines and Sampras Extreme tennis will be making their way to the Saturn in the next few months, although Micro Machines was the only product available to playtest at the show.

Although the programmers decided to utilise 3D for the latest version, it was good to see that all the brilliant playability from the last three versions was still evident in the game – in fact it remains almost identical in terms of playability where the races take place in different rooms of a house, plus levels out in the garden and around the toilet rim. However, it differs from the 16-bit versions in that the races are played over different screen levels, with huge drops in between sections of track and multi-angled viewing.

There's no doubt that Micro Machines is going to be a huge hit when it's released this Autumn, although it has to be said that the programmers have a huge amount of development time to catch up on – the game is already playable on the Playstation and Codies are hoping for a simultaneous or as near as possible release for Saturn. Look out for a showcase within the next couple of months!







TIME ATTACK FINISH!

At last! After six months of ceaseless rally driving, our Sega Rally Time Attack competition has reached its conclusion. 'So where are the results?!' we hear you blubber in abject confusion and despair. Worry not. While you're reading this those responsible for the three fasted times are being contacted and asked to cough up their video evidence. In next month's issue we'll print the winner, along with the video showing just how they managed to get such a fast time — and by thunder is it fast! Anyway, don't send in any more entries now because it's all over, finished and done with. If you do send in any more entries we'll be forced to come round your house and turn all the furniture upside down to confuse you.

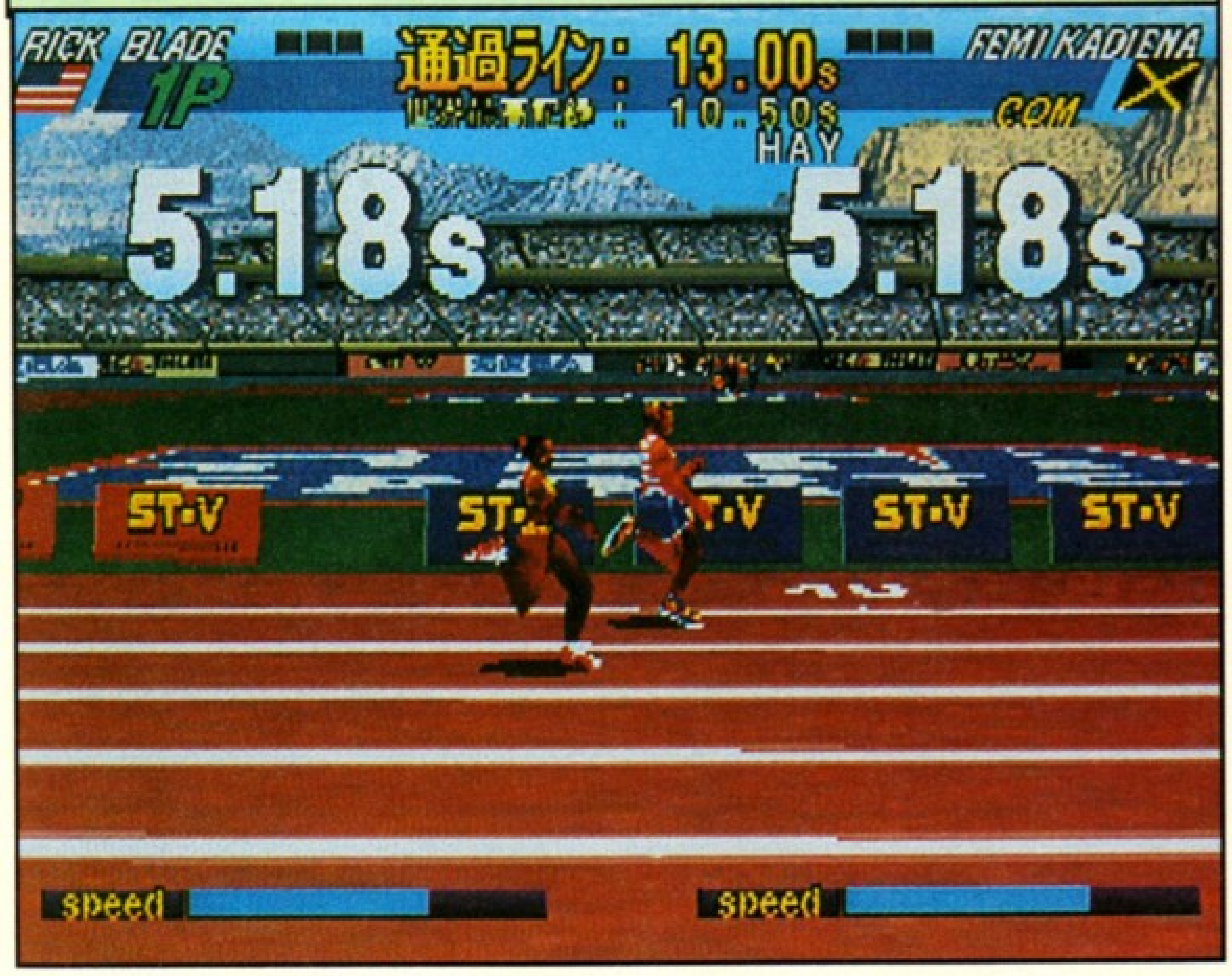
DEM BONES

Another title deep in development from Segasoft is Mr Bones, an adventure game featuring a skeleton. In his normal stringy state, Mr Bones is a pretty useless kind of guy, but by rearranging his bones in all kinds of inventive ways, he can do things he would previously only dreamed about! Part of the game was playable at the show, although there's loads of development time left to go on this one – in fact it's unlikely to see a release until the closing months of this year!



ONE TO WATCH!

A couple of months ago we brought you shots of the then in-development version of Decathlete, an arcade title developed using the ST-V board. Well, the game is nearing completion and should do really well, as it's released in time for the Olympic Games. More exciting though is the news that the Saturn version will appear in Japan almost simultaneously and should be in the shops by mid-July. There's also plans to release the game in Europe in a couple of months time, and work has already begun on a PAL conversion. So, you can definitely expect to see a showcase on the title in our next issue.





FORMER SOVIET UNION SEES STRIKE

One of the most impressive, yet understated games at the show had to be Electronic Arts' Soviet Strike, the fourth game in the Strike series and the first on a next generation system.

Created by the developers of the original game, this fourth installment takes place in the former Soviet Union, where you're drafted in once again to catch the bad guys and complete very specific mission objectives. The game's developers decided not to take the fashionable option and make the game a first person perspective adventure, instead, sticking to the traditional overhead gameplay, which serves the game very well indeed. However, despite using similar play mechanics, Soviet Strike looks distinctly different from the other three games in that the graphics are completely updated, with loads of detail on the helicopter and the terrains too.

We had a quick playtest of the early game at the show (at the moment, only one level of the title is complete) and it was easily one of the most impressive titles on offer. Look out for more news nearer to its release date in Autumn.





THIS YEAR'S BEST SELLER?

Well, it wouldn't be a complete show report without the inclusion of a new FIFA game would it Yep, EA are preparing this year's Christmas assault at this very moment, and as ever, the early version indicates that this installment will be every bit as good as the previous four versions of the game, and this time, the developers have decided to give both the game engine and the graphics a bit of an overhaul and the result is a much smoother, deeper game than before, with vastly improved graphics. You can bet that this is going to be yet another amazing success for EA come December – the magical FIFA can't possibly fail!

DAY TWO OF E3

Sega follow in Sony's footsteps and after all-night telephone calls to Sega Japan, decide to slash their price point to $199 too. There's no mention of a UK price point though.

DAY THREE OF E3

Sega Europe are still undecided over the pricepoint of the UK Saturn. There's talk of pack-in deals at £249 and a standalone at £199, but no decision is made.







MORE SOCCER FOR SATURN!

Worldwide Soccer has been around on the import scene for a couple of months already under the name of Victory Goal 2 – but hey don't let that put you off, this is way better than anything in the first game! In fact, by all accounts, this could just turn out to be the footie game of the year – the graphics are brilliant, the gameplay beats the pants off anything seen on any other system, and even better, Sega are hoping to have it released in this country in time for Christmas! Work on a PAL conversion has commenced, and it should be a pretty easy task, as it's unlikely that the gameplay will change much – any alterations will probably involve the teams more than anything else. Anyway, we can't bring you much info on this one at the moment, but believe us, the is going to be absolutely huge come Christmastime!





STREETRACER BLASTS ON TO SATURN

Following Ubisoft's 16-bit hit with Streetracer, the French development company have decided to port the game across to the Saturn. The cartoon-based racing game will feature improved graphics and will even utilise and eight-player split screen option, something which was unfortunately unavailable for playtest at the show. This is scheduled for an Autumn release and provided the multi-player option is up to scratch, it should prove very popular.



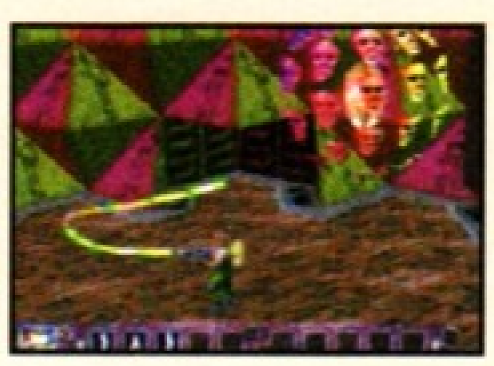


CONTRA GETS CONVERSION

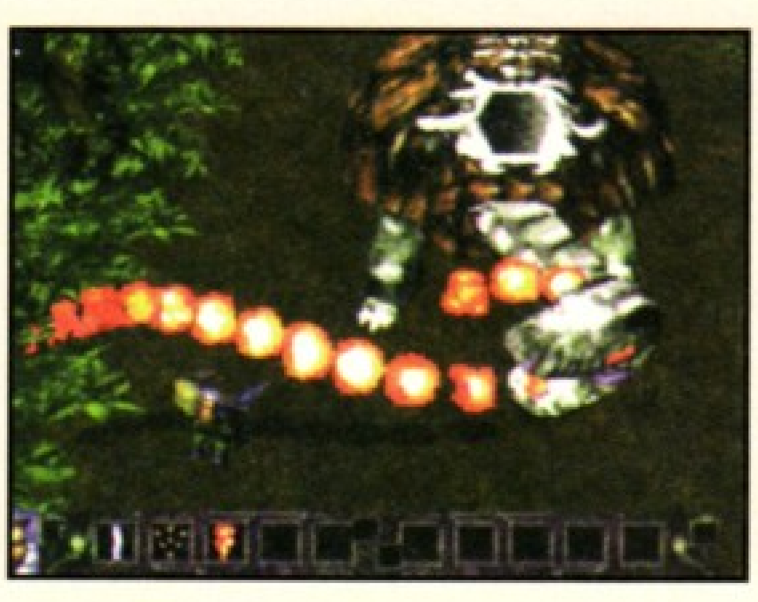
Remember Probotector on the Megadrive? It was a huge hit for both Megadrive and SNES, and in a fit of brilliance, Konami have decided to convert it to the Saturn too! And, while the graphics are much more detailed than any version seem before, the gameplay remains as riveting as it ever was, and Konami have also decided to include a special 3D option which requires the player to wear special 3D specs (included with the game). It's difficult to say how well this option will work, but hey, if you don't like it, you can always turn the option off and play the game as normal! Expect to see more on this one over the coming months.

E3 SHOW HIT!









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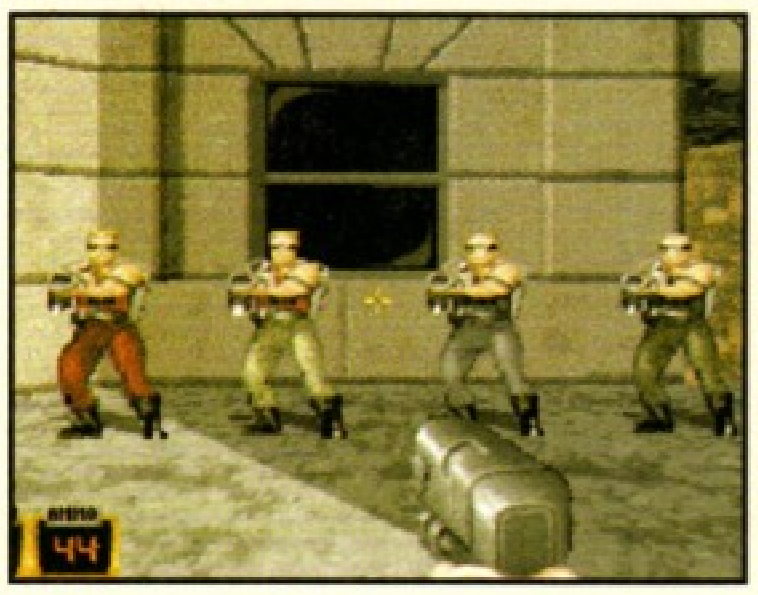
DUKE NUKEM 3D

Distributors GT, fast becoming known as "the company with all the Doom games" have announced yet another first-person perspective shoot 'em up to add to their collection. Duke Nukem 3D, already released on other formats, was signed up for release on the Saturn at the show, and although there was no version of the game available to playtest, should do really well when it's released in the Autumn.

Although the game utilises a standard Doom engine, it differs from iD's games in that there's more blood, multi-layered levels, the game plays faster and the character can do things like go to the toilet and swear a lot. Obviously, the game will receive an 18 certificate in this country. But even if you're younger, you probably wouldn't want to miss it at around Christmastime when it's released!



E3 SHOW HIT!







BEEN PUT BAKU BAKU

Baku Baku Animal should finally be hitting the shops any day now, and will go on sale for £29.99. Buy it now!



ONE WEEK LATER

Sega announce that the UK Saturn's price will also drop to £199! Much dancing and jubilation is undertaken by anyone thinking of buying a Saturn!

WORK BEGINS ON MANX!

Although Manx TT wasn't revealed at the E3 show, some interesting news regarding the conversion slipped out on the first day of the show. Apparently, this will be the first racing game to incorporate 60fps (frames per second) into the gameplay, and although Sega haven't confirmed this is true, it's definitely something that they're aiming for. Work has already begun on the conversion, although it's unlikely that we'll be able to get hold of any screenshots for a couple of months at least – a special top secret team are working on the project. Anyway, sorry that there's no pictures available for this one yet, but here's a couple from the arcade anyway, just to remind you of what this awesome game looks like.



Hey! It's one of the bikes in Manx TT! You know, if you're really lucky, you might get to see the very first screenshots of this next month. Then again You may have to wait a bit longer. it all depends.

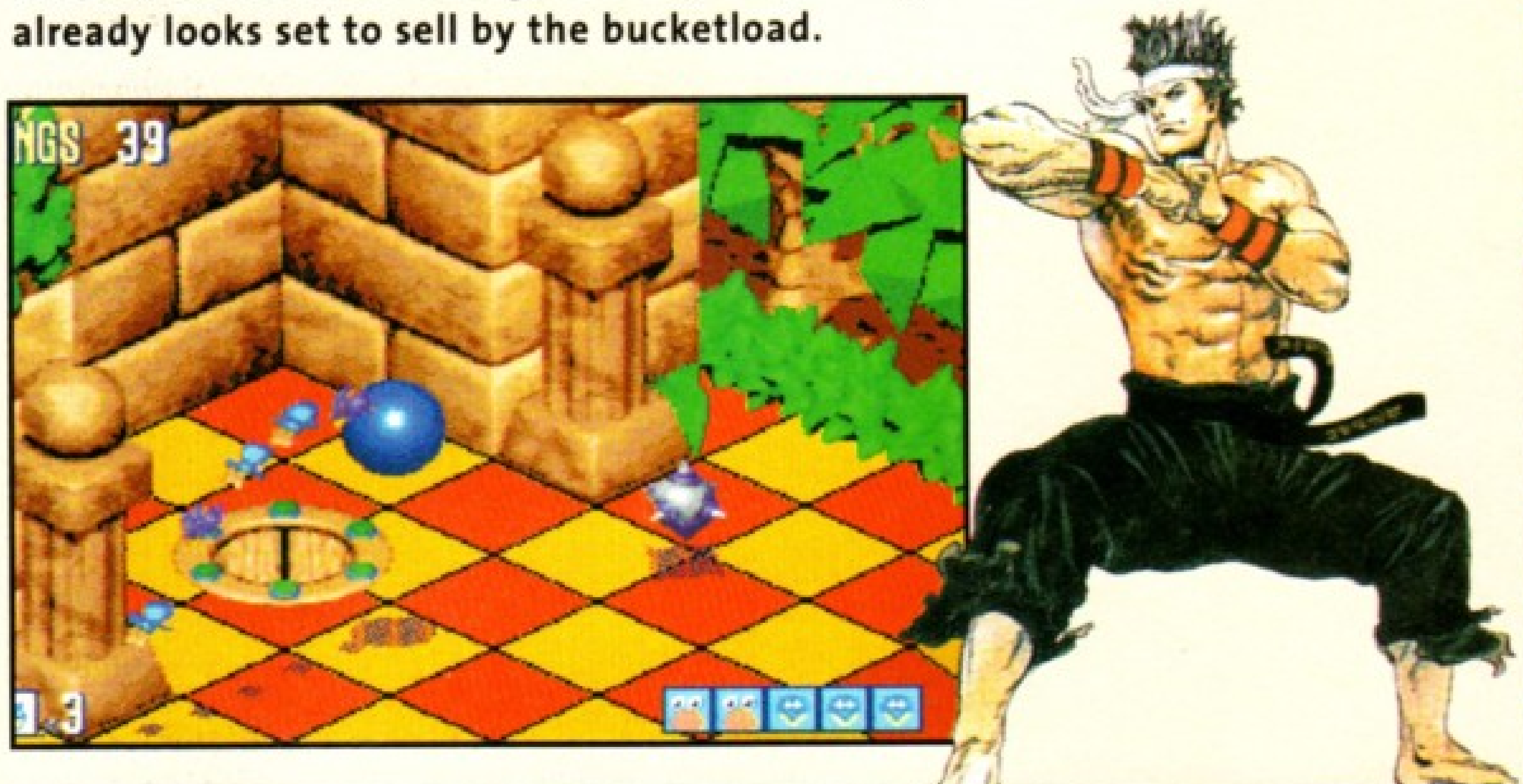




16-BIT GETS SONIC AND VIRTUA FIGHTER

Yes, you did read that right. Virtua Fighter will be released on the Megadrive! An announcement was made at the E3 show confirming that VF will appear on 16-bit this Christmas, although no version or screenshots were available at the time of going to press. It appears that Virtua Fighter will be renamed Virtua Fighter Animation and the graphics will be changed to more "Streetfightery" characters and will not utilise polygons. Anyway, if any of you still have a soft spot for 16-bit, you may want to check this out later on in the year.

As for the 16-bit Sonic game, Sega have done the Megadrive proud with an absolutely stunning adventure entitled Sonic 3D. Obviously, the game is completely 3D and although there's more freedom of movement, it plays in a very similar way to previous Sonic games. Another one due for a Christmas release, this looks as though it's Sega's "goodbye" to the Megadrive and already looks set to sell by the bucketload.



MANX MIX

Sometimes, in the excitement of putting SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE together, we make mistakes. Little tiny ones usually. But last month we made a bit of a bungle when we pictured Sega's Manx TT bike alongside a story about Virgin's sponsorship of rider Jamie Robinson. That was wrong, and we truly apologise. In fact, the real deal is that Sega have sponsored their very own team in the forthcoming Isle of Man TT races, Team Sega Suzuki. The team is led by four-times-winner of the championships, Jim Moodie which means that with any luck they'll probably win again! Anyway, sorry for any misunderstandings that might have arisen over this story.



HMV CHARTS

Week ending May 31, 1996

HMV — KNOW HMV · KNOW GAMES

	Title	By
1	Streetfighter Alpha	Virgin
2	Panzer Dragoon Zwei	Sega
3	Sega Rally	Sega
4	Virtua Cop (game and gun)	Sega
5	NFL: Quarterback Club	Sega
6	X-Men Children Of The Atom	Acclaim
7	FIFA '96	Electronic Arts
8	Sim City 2000	Sega
9	D	Acclaim
10	Wipeout	Sega

SATURN MAGAZINE CHARTS

1	Streetfighter Alpha	Capcom
2	Virtua Fighter Kids	Sega
3	Euro '96	Sega
4	Baku Baku Animal	Sega
5	Virtua Fighter 2	Sega
6	Panzer Dragoon 2	Sega
7	Sega Rally	Sega
8	Loaded	Gremlin
9	Gungriffon	Sega
10	Need for Speed	EA

READER CHARTS

Sent in by David Chisel of Notts. David, a game is on the way to you!

1	Sega Rally	Sega
2	Panzer Dragoon 2	Sega
3	Streetfighter Alpha	Sega
4	Virtua Cop	Sega
5	Daytona USA	Sega
6	Euro '96	Gremlin
7	Panzer Dragoon	Sega
8	Wing Arms	Sega
9	X-Men	Acclaim
10	Mystaria	Sega

If you would like to see your chart features, send in your top ten to READER CHARTS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Anyone who has their charts printed will receive a game for their troubles!

IREM ARCADE CLASSICS

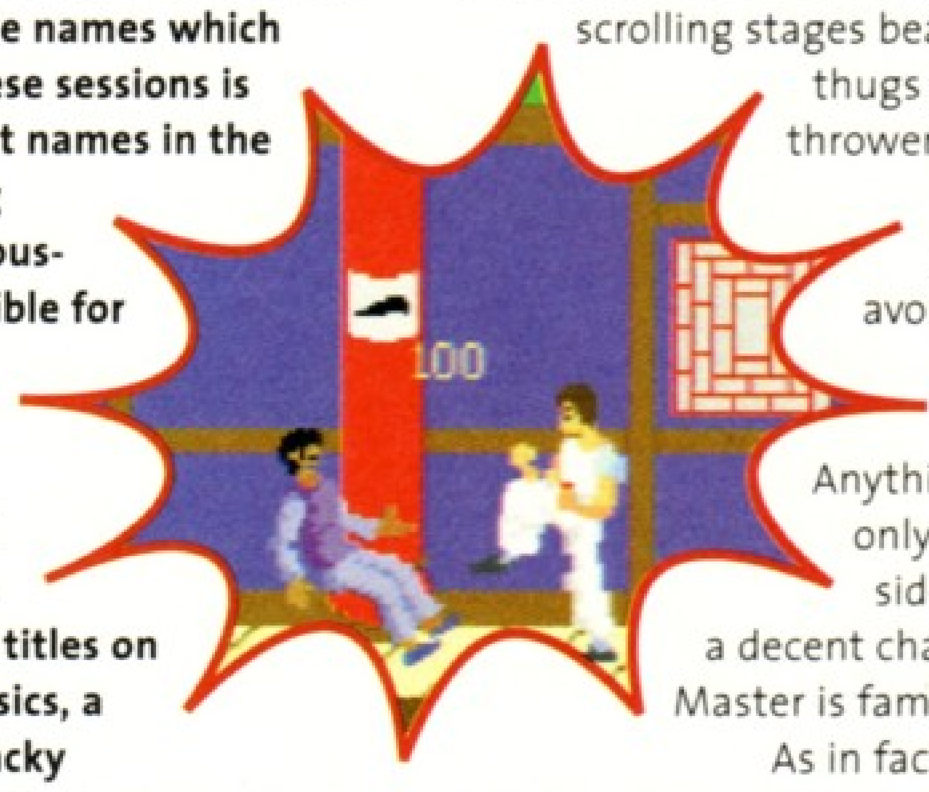




Games that wear flares!

PUBLISHER	GAME STYLE	RELEASE DATE
Irem	Compilation	August
ORIGIN	Crumbly coin-ops of a long ago age.	
ITS A BIT LIKE	Watching one of those Make 'Em Laugh compilations of ancient Carry On and Tony Hancock sketches everyone thought were really funny in the Sixties.	

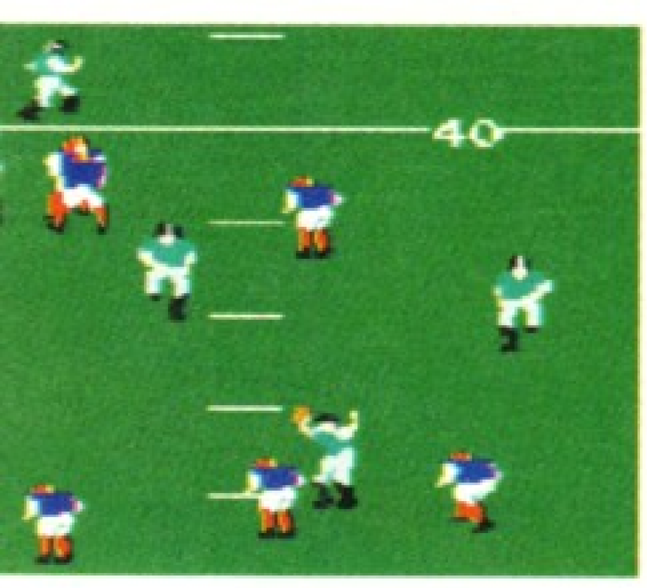
Old people tell you all sorts of lies about how much better everything was when they were young. You could leave your back door open, bread tasted better, the sunsets were redder etc etc etc. What they generally neglect to mention is that they were constantly burgled, ate bits of dead fieldmouse and watched distant cities burning brightly in the Blitz. Such is the seductive power of rose-tinted lenses. The same rules apply when talking about old games. Weary games hacks (ie – us) can ramble on for hours about how great all the ancient Spectrum titles are (especially Dave, retro games king), even the ones which were, even then, crap. One of the names which crops up unavoidably during these sessions is Irem. Irem are one of the biggest names in the old games biz, as they're among the longest-running software houses in the world. They're responsible for some of the famousest titles of the first flush of video games, producing innovative arcade machines such as Metrorun and R-Type along the way. They also obviously perpetrated the three titles on the first instalment of Irem Classics, a trip through history with the wacky folks from Irem. The games on offer here are Zippy Race, Ten Yard Fight and the legendary Kung-Fu Master.

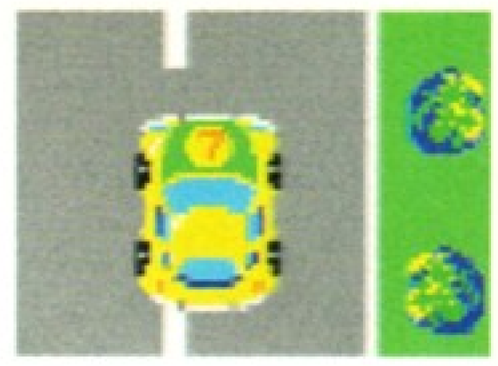


All of these date back about ten years or more, so as you can expect they're not quite on the cutting edge of polygon technology. Aah, readers, but this is back when games were games, featuring chunky colourful block graphics, not more than two buttons and the most irritating sound you've ever heard in your life. They're what your mum and dad think games are like.

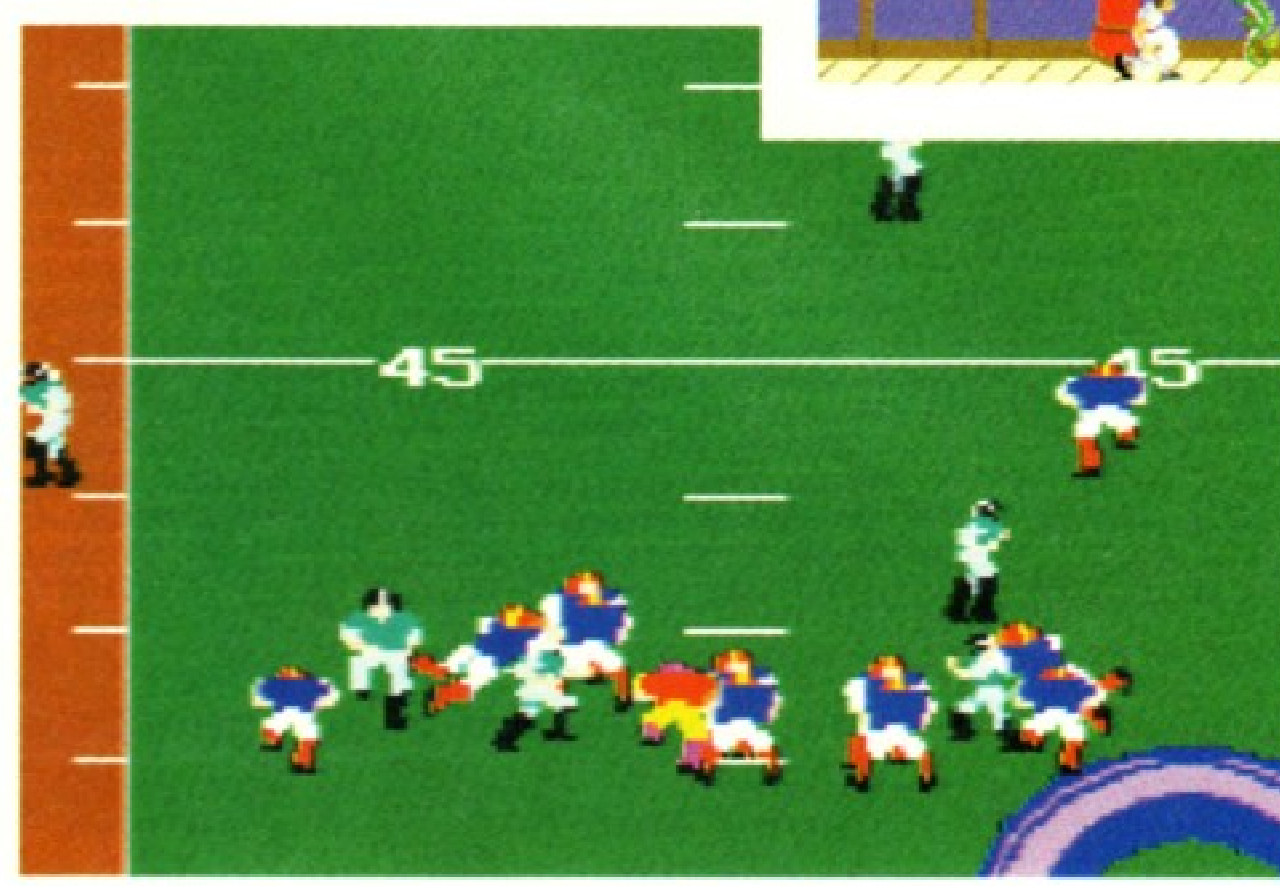
So how did "the kids" electronically entertain themselves in years gone by? Why with racing games, sports games and beat 'em ups. Zippy Race seats you on a motorbike involved in an American coast-to-coast jaunt, driving up the screen avoiding the obstacles and other vehicles along your path. There are five stages which alternate between road racing and cross-country scrambling (so the roads between Denver and Chicago must be pretty crap), with only your fuel gauge to stand in the way of completing the run. Ten Yard Fight is, surprisingly, an American football effort. Not on the scale of John Madden or anything – you can't even pass the ball once you've completed kick-off or whatever it's called. Indeed, you never play in defence either. Basically, you either score a touchdown in the time limit and win or you don't. Of course, there's more to it than that – but not a lot. Kung-Fu Master holds a special place in the memory of any die-hard gamer. The precursor to games like Streets of Rage (but without any screen depth), KFM asks you to traverse a series of horizontally-scrolling stages beating up thugs and knife-throwers (with a single punch, usually) and avoiding snakes, dragons and bombs. Anything which only has five levels, even considering bosses, has to provide a decent challenge, and Kung-Fu Master is famous for being rock.

As in fact are all the games on offer – the shortness of the content makes this essential, and means there's no such thing as continues. The burning question is whether any one of them has stood up to the notoriously tricky exam set by Old Father Time. Well, we'll tell you next month if you're good.

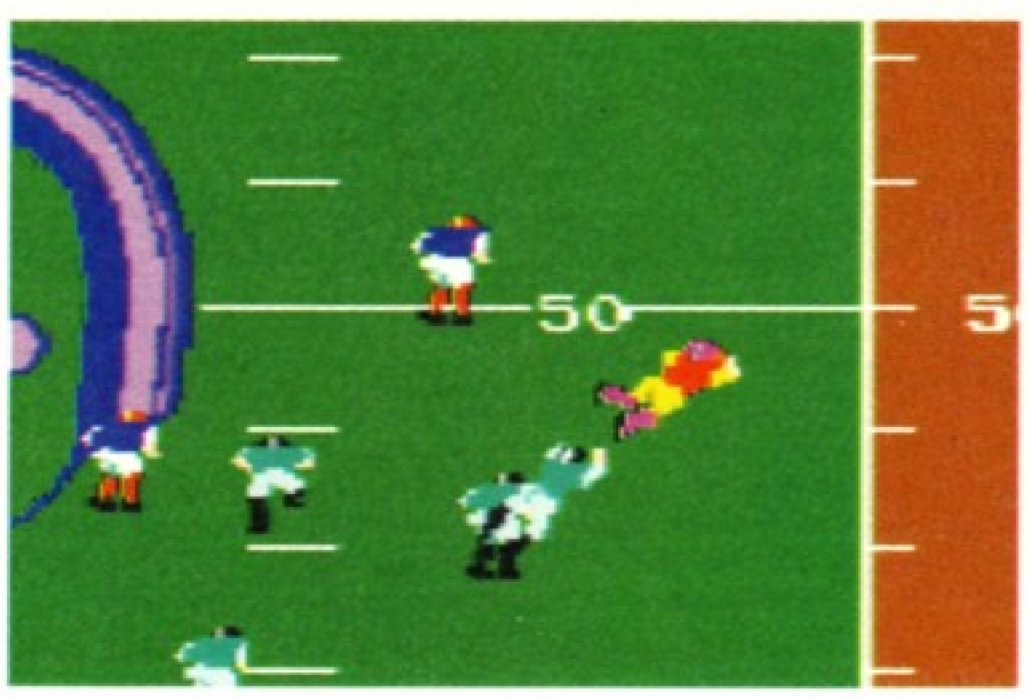


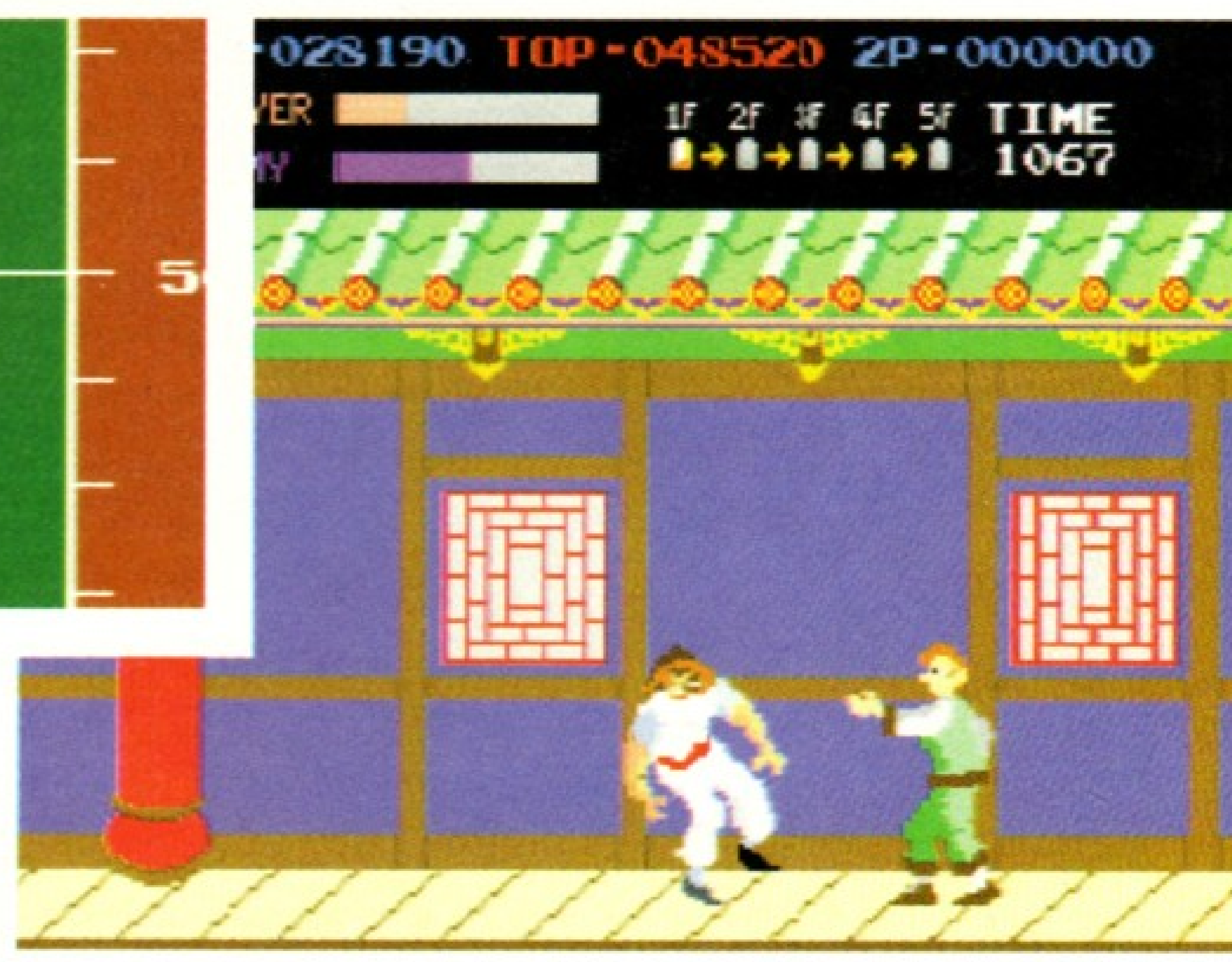






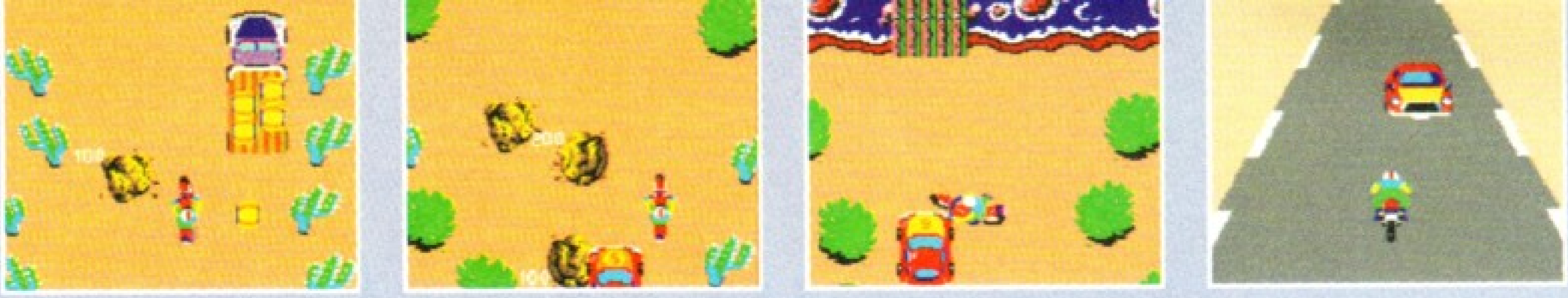






From tiny gaming acorns such as this did mighty software oaks grow. Honest.





ZIPPY RACE

A wow in its day thanks to an innovative use of switching perspective. As your bike approaches its destination the view changes from an above-the-action camera to a behind-the-player one, as you drive into the screen avoiding the oncoming motors.

NOT AS IMPRESSIVE AS:	Sega Rally.
BUTTONABILITY:	Uses only one button (accelerate).

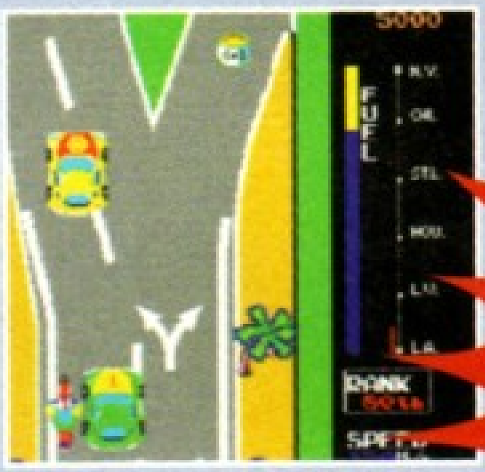








You can just feel the pulse-pounding thrills in store for you in Zippy Race



Keep you motor running, head out on the highway, looking for adventure, and whatever comes my way. But don't forget to collect fuel.



The intricate plot details of Kung Fu Master are fully explained and brilliantly translated.



You can see the wealth of narrative invention from this complete look at the whole intro.

KUNG-FU MASTER

Guide your Bruce Lee lookalike through flat horizontal levels populated with judo blokes who sap your energy with their grabs, knife throwers (who need all of two hits to kill), dragons and snakes which drop from the ceiling, floating bombs and rock hard bosses – and sometimes all of these at the same time. Don't wet your pants.

NOT AS IMPRESSIVE AS:	Guardian Heroes.
BUTTONABILITY:	Two – one punch, one kick (but just use kick all the time – it's easier).



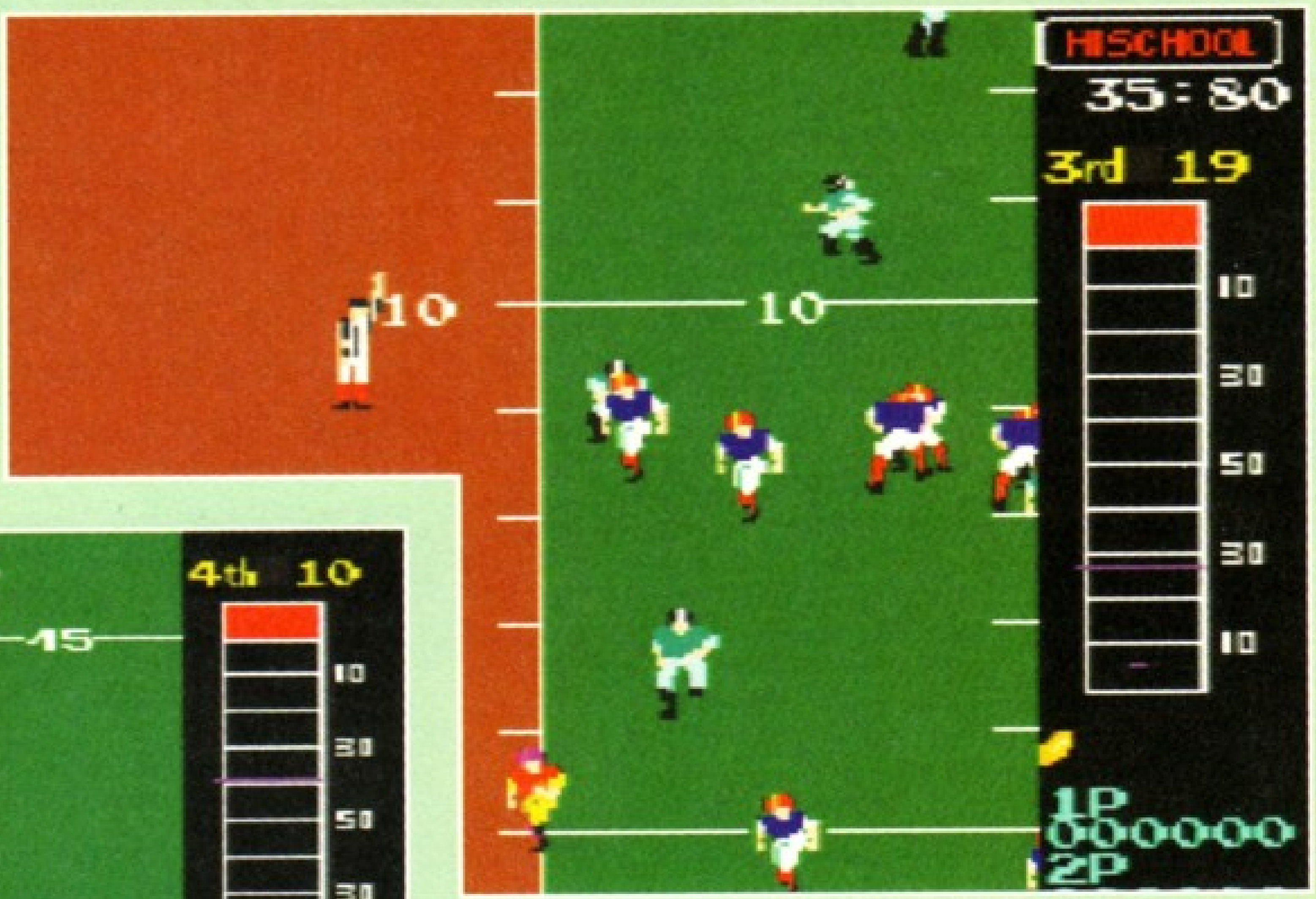


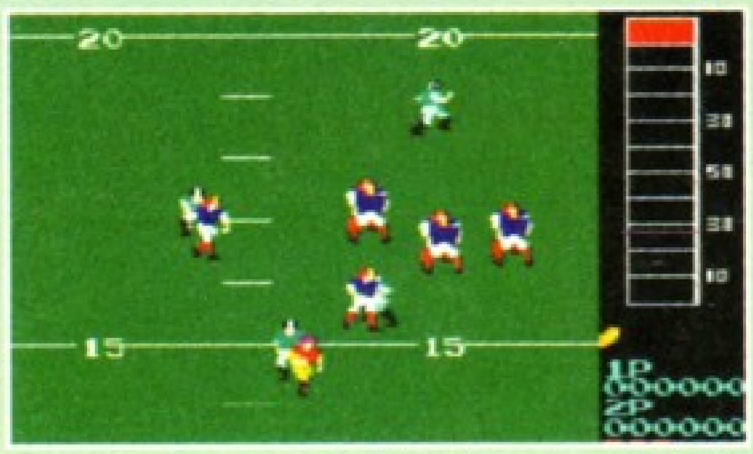


TEN YARD FIGHT

Clever use of one central player surrounding by team-mates who stay in formation but follow your path, allowing the player to block the opposing defence with computer drones whilst running for that glorious touchdown. It also takes your snail-like quarterback about a hundred years to run a single lengthy yard.

NOT AS IMPRESSIVE AS:	Joe Montana American Football on the Master System
BUTTONABILITY:	A mighty two buttons, one for the kick-off and another to pass to your running player or shake off opponents who grab your shoulders.









Hi there! My names Turbo Jones. And boy, do I like to fish! Yeehaa!

SEABASS FISHING

PUBLISHER	GAME STYLE	RELEASE DATE
JVC	Sports sim	July
ORIGIN	The hunting method and popular pastime	
ITS A BIT LIKE	Well, err, sitting on a boat getting a suntan. Except fishing as well.	

And I'm telling you, it was this big! Honest!









With catching fish, it's all in the eyes. As soon as they blink you know you've got them...oh, hold on, fish don't blink. Maybe it's the gills...





Think very hard for a moment. Try to imagine a pastime that no one would ever contemplate using as a premise for a game. Right up there with car maintenance and gardening would no doubt be fishing. Well, with the later I'm afraid you're completely wrong because Sea Bass fishing uses exactly that premise. Yep, you are hearing things right, we're talking about a fishing sim here. Bizarre as this may seem to you at the moment, imagine for a minute the reaction of many when someone first decided that a golfing sim would be a good idea. Ok, so you might think there's a bit more to golf than there is to fishing but, as your average Johnny McFish would tell you, that's just because you don't know fishing.

Sea Bass Fishing would seem to be a testament to this, containing as it does complexities you'd never think of associating with a spot of the ole' reel 'n' tackle.



JVC are the company behind a UK release of the game. It's already proved quite popular in Japan, catching the more mature market with its relaxed and meditative qualities, and JVC hope it will absorb the golfing-style fan. Your dad basically.

Sea Bass Fishing actually shares a few characteristics in common with the golfing game. You'll notice the golf-style power bar which you use to cast your tackle, and the subtleties of which you must master to reel in a fish. It's also something to do with the leisurely pace of the game which sees you nonchalantly sailing from place to place in search of the elusive Sea Bass — the most prized of an anglers catches.

Players choose between taking part in the illustrious competition or simply fishing for fun off the coasts and estuaries of what we can only presume is Japan. Judging in the competition is based on the weight of a fish, the kind of fish it is and how many you manage to capture within a particular time period. The expert advice of Daiwa (renowned fishing gurus apparently) has been used to try and develop as realistic a feel to the game as possible. After getting up bright and early you select the captain of your boat and head out to one of a variety of destinations, remembering of course to pack your rod and range of tackles.

When you get a bite, the action switches to an underwater scene where you witness your fish struggling to be 'the one that got away'. Now's when your expertise in teasing and tricking the fish come to the fore. If you're having a rough time of it, the captain's there to suggest an alteration of strategy and generally blather on about his or her adventures on the high seas.

So is it simply a bit of novelty value or this there really a game here? We'll save our comments for the review next month. For now though, take out those soggy sandwiches and your flask of lukewarm tea and wait for the first bite of the day!



THANKS TO EMAP'S SEA ANGLER MAGAZINE FOR THIS FISH PICTURE





After you've netted the fish, its style and size are put on proud display.



FISH FOR THOUGHT

So you think catching fishing is all about throwing out a line and hanging about eh? Tusk! You know nothing! Great fisherman never wait for the fish to come to the hooks, they go and tease them out. How? As Sea Bass Fishing will demonstrate it involves a number of things. Firstly it depends on how far out you decide to throw the line. The longer you let the reel spin the further it goes. Then there's the depth of the bait to consider. The depth of the bait determines the kind of fish you're likely to get. When you do get a bite, it's down to how you work the tension in the line — pull too hard and it might snap, leave it too slack and likewise, you're in trouble. Now listen, you've got to wear the fish down, gradually reeling it in until you can get a net under it. You've got to know how every kind of fish reacts, get inside the fish's mind, be the fish! Errr, if you know what I mean.







If you want to get the biggest and best fish, you've got to know your lures!





It's only natural that the captain of your boat is the much loved sea dog, Captain Birdseye. After you've impressed your fishing pals with your catch, he sneaks it all into a suitcase and then flogs it on to major supermarket chains. Cunning eh, but then only the best is fit for the Captain's table!

THE LURE OF THE FISH

Forget collecting maggots from a piece of rotten meat in Arthur Fowlers shed. No East End poverty bait for you sir. As a cool playboy sailing type, not only do have better destinations than the Scumwelk Canal to fish in, you also do away with bait altogether in favour of 'lures'. For example, there's the minnow plug which looks a bit like a small fish and has a plastic lip allowing the angler to let it float in shallow water and sink in deeper water. Exactly why a plastic lip should enable this is a bit beyond me, but there you go. There are a total of eight lures in all, some like the 'jig' and 'top water plugs' are designed to attract a specific kind of fish, tuna or yellow tail for example. Others, like the minnow plug are for general use. It may all seem a bit confusing to your average angling rookie but grow a gnarled white beard and it soon becomes second nature.







PRIZES MAKE POINTS

If you want to be a big point scorer then you're going to need to figure out which kinds of fish score you the most points. The elusive Sea Bass is the great prize, revered among the sea-faring community, feared by plankton and eaten by the hungry. But catching one of these won't be easy, and besides there are loads of other fish to seek out; Tuna, Barracuda, Mackerel and Mullet to name but a few. If your fish is under the proper weight then you have to throw it back. There are three tournaments in all, starting with the amateur tournament which is the easiest. After success here, it's on to the pro tournament, and finally, for the truly divine among fisherman there's the Sea Bass Classic tournament where the best of the best (a kind of Top Gun with rods) battle it out for the coveted trophy.



Cast dear fellow and good luck to you!



Here are the destinations on offer to you.



Fight stars like some kind of drunken tramp at the Oscars!

STARFIGHTER 3000

PUBLISHER	GAME STYLE	RELEASE DATE
TELSTAR	Shoot 'em up	June
ORIGIN	Conversion of the 3DO title.	
ITS A BIT LIKE	Afterburner in 3D, or Thunderhawk with a space 'plane	

You know the space ship that appears on the Saturn CD screen if you leave it for a bit? Well now's your chance to fly it in combat it thanks to this new blaster by Telstar. Well, not quite, but your craft in Starfighter 3000 bears quite a striking resemblance to the one found free inside every Saturn. However, this is mere coincidence, as Starfighter 3000 first made its name on the 3DO some time ago, when free space ships in 32-BIT consoles were the stuff of fantasy. How fast the times turn, readers. Anyway, this is another of those future war titles, where the player helms a one-man defence force kicking aliens off of planet Earth. Or perhaps some other planet. In fat, for all we know, you might be kicking invading Earthlings off an entirely different planet. The plot hasn't been explained all that specifically. Not that it matters, because all Starfighter 3000 wants you to do is DESTROY.

There are fifty – in fact more than fifty – missions of doom contained within Starfighter. Each mission contains a number of objectives which you're allowed to tackle in any order you wish. But, and this is the clever bit kids, the order in which you complete each sub-mission affects the way the rest f the level goes. For example, knocking out radar stations prevents your enemies from targeting missiles at you, whereas ignoring hangars may lead to extra airborne defences coming at you in the later stages of the game.

Like most titles we see these days Starfighter is viewed in glorious Threedimensions-O-Vision, with your 'plane-type thing viewed from a rearward perspective. However, there's a "unique" system being developed which should allow you to target missiles at odd tangents whilst still fighting foes dead-ahead. And that's not all – Telstar promise a surfeit of little extra like chain reaction attacks, super weapons, experimental fighter 'planes and even bonus games to tickle your interest gland.

So is Starfighter 3000 going to be an essential plasma-feast at the Devil's table, or is it the sort of game that'll have you wandering round your house smashing things with a cricket bat chanting "bored bored bored"? Well, it's not finished yet, so we can't tell you – but we will in a future issue. Promise.

WICKEDY BASS BAD BOY

Just because games are being put on CDs these days every software house in the world has suddenly become obsessed with the music accompanying the action. Like if they're good enough loads of people are going to start buying fifty quid games just to play on their regular CD player at home. Starfighter 3000 is the latest of these wishfully chartward-bound games, featuring as it does a selection of eight – EIGHT – different soundtracks ranging (as it says here) from "ambient to full-on space battle!". Blimey, that's nearly two-thirds of an album's worth of music. Amazing.



Another thrilling display of aerobatics from those incredible stunt pilots the Grey Devils. Not really. It's just your space ship travelling in a straight line.





Choose your favourite tunes here.









WINGMEN FOR ADDED PROTECTION

Starfighter reckons it's one of them "thinking man's shoot 'em up" things, which means you've got to use your head muscle a bit as well as your fingers. Chief element in this, shall we say, reconstruction of the previously macho-oriented blasting genre is an option to control various allies. Apparently you'll be able to give orders to up to ten wingmen in your platoon (or whatever groups of 'planes are called), sending them off to destroy far-flung targets or keeping them around you to defend your own cowardly hide.











Positioning cameras changes what you can see and that. Lots of games are doing this now because it's dead easy with polygons.





PILOT YOUR OWN ANGELS OF DEATH!

Clever modern technology allows us to "lock" our missiles onto targets, meaning they'll find their own way to their destination even if it's moving. Highly useful for destroying noisy helicopters flying over your house. If you're too poor to buy your own missiles, perhaps the "lock-on" facility present in Starfighter 3000 will interest you. It allows the player to use a separate camera for firing rocket-base projectiles – meaning the dogfight combat you'll doubtless be engaged in need not be interrupted simply for the devastation of an objective sitting on the ground.

A beautifully designed space ship which looks far better than most of those grotesque abominations found in games.









YOU WANNA GET LOADED ?!!!



Well do you cyber kids? Eh? You've come to the right place then because this here's the Loaded competition, and those kind souls at Gremlin have very generously offered to give away loads of prizes to celebrate the release of their blast 'em up extravaganza.

As our review on page 62 will tell you, Loaded is a very fine game indeed. After perusing the screenshots you're probably getting very excited at the thought of mass gut-spilling bone-snapping action, but hold on there Trigger Boy because, like the characters in Loaded, you have a chance to beat the rap and get your hands on a copy without paying for it. No we don't mean steam into your local games shop with a flamethrower and ultra bomb – you can win a copy! And that's not all

THE PRIZE

So there you are, listening to your grunge favourites on that tinny single speaker Hirari that your dad got from a Boot Fair for 60p. Well it needn't be like that you know, especially considering the fact that Gremlin are giving away a lovely new Sony stereo as the first prize in their competition, and what's more, you get a signed copy of the new Pop Will Eat Itself album, 'Two Fingers My Friend', along with a copy of the game and the obligatory T-Shirt. Pretty damn good I'm sure you'll agree. There are also five runners-up prizes which come in the shape of the game, wrapped in a lovely Loaded T-Shirt!

THE QUESTION "Just tell me what I have to do!!!" we hear you scream maniacally along the telepathic highway. As usual it's all quite simple. Just answer this criminally easy question:

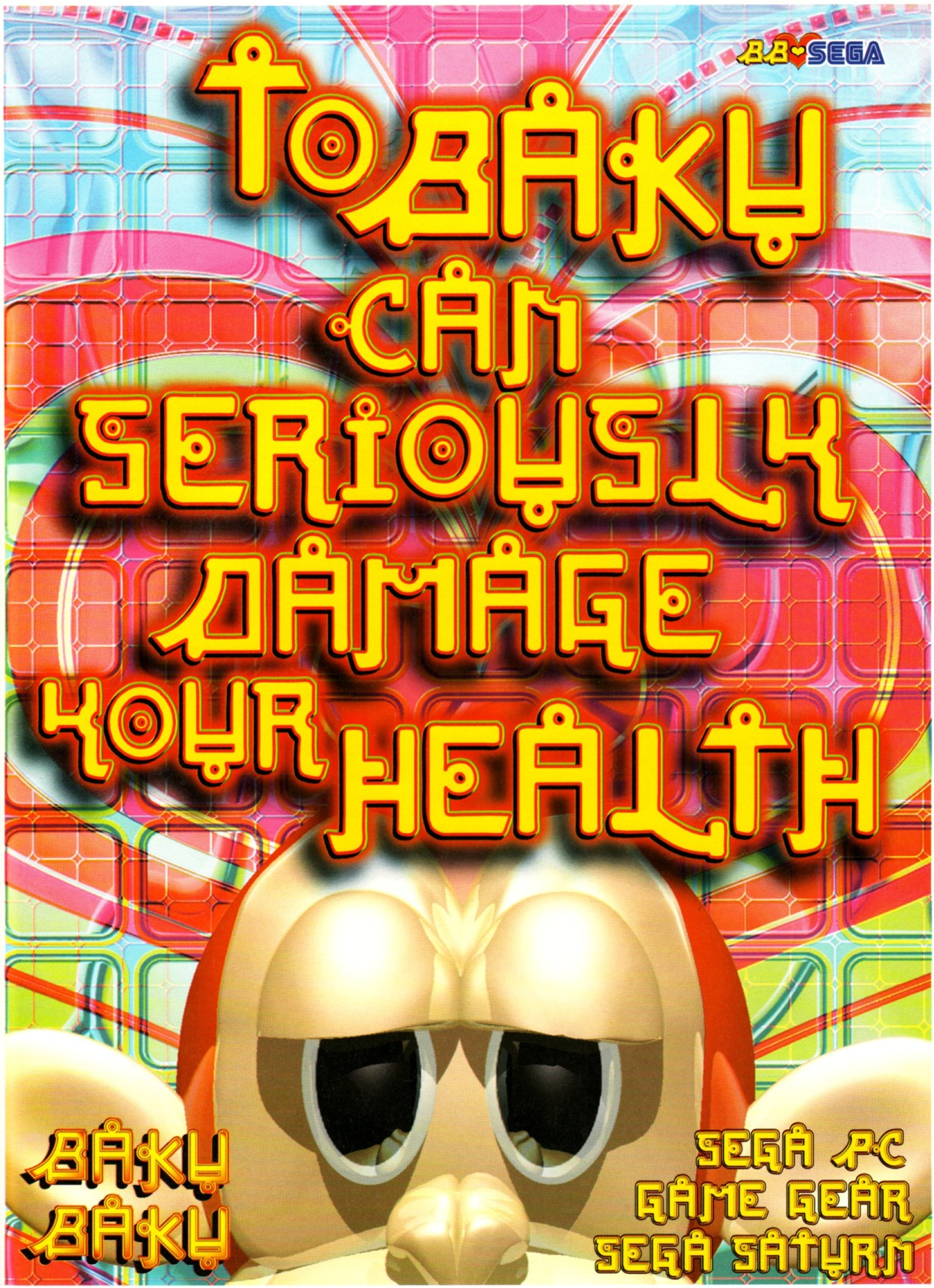
What's the name of the pistol wielding pirate in Loaded?

Ok, now stick your answers on a postcard, back of an envelope, bit of cereal packet etc. and send them in to LOADED COMPO, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

LOADED

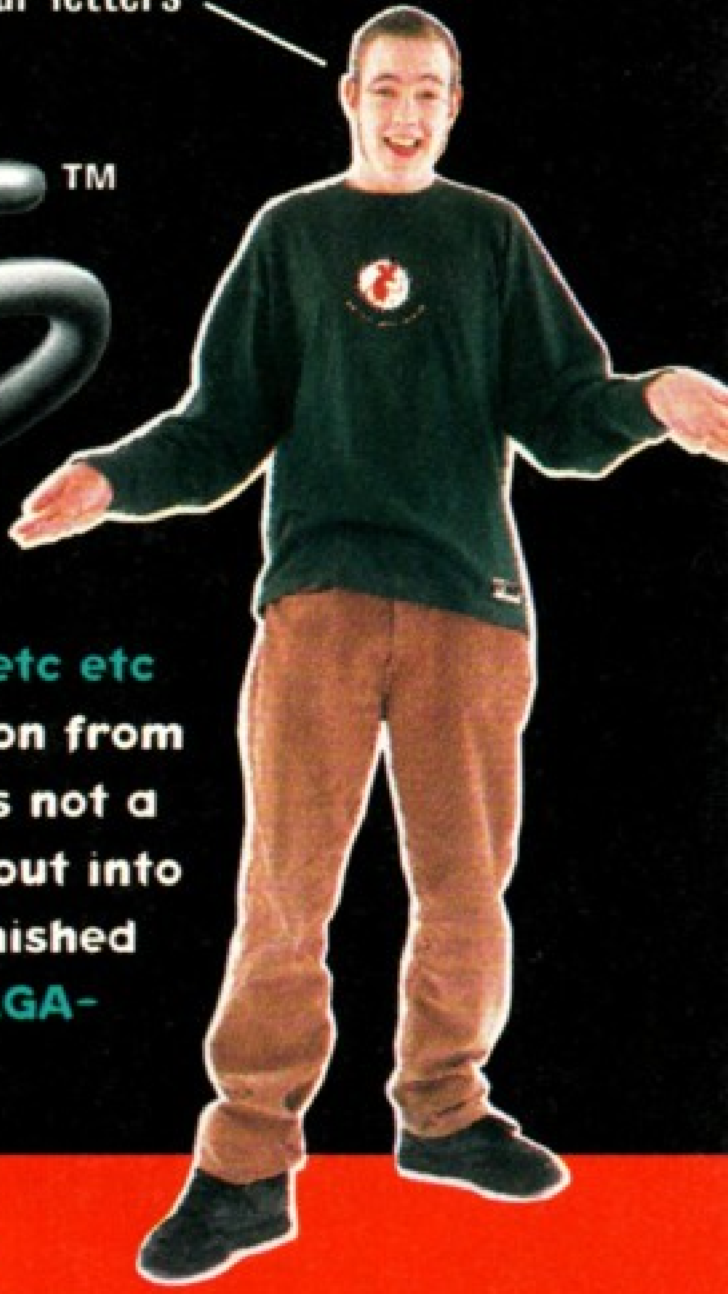
Gremlin




SEGA
TOBAKU CAN SERIOUSLY DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH
BAKU BAKU
SEGA PC
GAME GEAR
SEGA SATURN

letters

Hello, I'm RAD
and I still answer
your letters



Hooray readers, summer is upon us, the bright days of the year blessing us with their rosy fingers etc etc etc. We end up saying this sort of thing every year, but that's because our offices look like the prison from Loaded and a bit of sunshine is the only comfort we get. Sadly though it also means "hibernation" is not a valid excuse for skiving anymore, so i've had to do some work. Bottoms. Anyway, why don't you go out into the garden, or down the park or somewhere, and write us a lovely sun-filled letter. When you've finished post the resultant discourse to us at SKIVING SAM'S HOLIDAY IN THE SUN LETTERS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDN, EC1R 3AU. Thank you very much.

UP THE SATURN 2

DEAR SSM,

After reding the news in the May edition of your geat mag, I have to say that I am totally disgusted by Sega's new hardware release – the £125 Saturn 2. Of course it will be brilliant for all those who haven't been able to buy a Next Generation machine because of the price, but what about those of us who bought the Saturn when it was first released? If Sega had told us that within a year of its release the price of the hardware was to go down by £275 then I think most of us would have waited for the Saturn 2. As it is, quite a few of us have suffered at the hands of Sega. I was one of the lucky few who got a full price Saturn for Christmas, which cost a bomb, so bringing the price down so drastically so quickly seems unfair and is no laughing matter. I think Sega should offer a free gift or something for all those people who returned their guarantee card by a certain date, just to soften the blow. Otherwise hundreds of Saturn owners like myself will feel very hard done by.

Ben Taylor, Braunton, N Devon.

Calm down Ben, the Saturn 2 costs the equivalent of £125 *in Japan only* and comparing the prices they pay for harware with the prices we pay is a bit ridiculous anyway. And besides, haven't you heard the news? The Saturn is being reduced to £199 in Britain. For more details check the news pages.

ARCADE RACER FURORE CONTINUES

DEAR SSM,

In reply to M Livingstone (issue 7) I would like to point out that the Arcade Racer does NOT make racing games easier. Don't get me wrong, it's a wicked addition to the Saturn and is well worth buying; it adds a very realistic feel to all driving games (even Cyber Speedway!), but it is easier to use a joypad, as you can straighten up your car a lot quicker and easier, especially in Sega Rally. So either you've got a dodgy joypad or you need to polish up your dodgy "gaming" skills! (No offence).

Yours faithfully,
David "Ace" Moore, Lydd-On-Sea, Kent.

Did your dad have something to do with the design for the Arcade Racer or something? I mean, extoll its virtues all you like, but saying it even improves *Cyber Speedway*?

AN OLD BLOKE

DEAR SMM,

If software houses are still looking for games to put onto the Next Generation consoles that they think will sell thousands of copies why do they not look back at older games and revamp them. I still own and even use a now very old and outdated Atari 800XL but still get hours of fun from classic software titles such as Boulderdash, Rescue on Fractulas and Star Raiders 2. In years gone by these titles were top notch, the dog's nuts etc etc. Who can forget Elite, Sabre Wulf, Spy Vs Spy, old games that we never thought would be outdated by a hedgehog and a rally car. I am sure that many readers of this excellent publication would agree that perhaps a readers survey of games they would most like to see revamped on the Saturn would be more popular than a general survey and who knows maybe a software house such as Core, Acclaim or even the AM people might resurrect a little piece of history. One can only hope and wonder at the possibilities of a 32-BIT running 8-BIT titles.

An Old Gamer But Still Quick On The Pad,
Mr David Charles Cutforth, Stamford, Lincs.



Dave Kelsall loves old games too. Check out his regular Retro Computer Cabin in our sister publication C&VG.

Whilst many old games have retained their appeal over time, billions more are now redunatant machine code dinosaurs. Plus, of course, they were designed with limited machines in mind, whilst today's games have the advantage of 32-BIT processors, polygon technology and all manner of clever effects. We'd like to see some old games on the Saturn too, but the best way to do that is in the manner of Irem's Arcade Classics (previewed on page 16 this ish).

I HAD SONY

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAG,

I have had a Sony Playstation since the day of release and have enjoyed it! However, I couldn't help feeling jealous when I saw Sega Rally and Virtua Cop etc when purchasing new PlayStation games!

This weekend my curiosity (and the fact the price has dropped) got me and I bought a Saturn along with six titles (three being only £10 each as part of the bargain!). Was I impresed? Was it a worthwhile spend? Does it compare to the PlayStation? Are the games as good as the PlayStation? The answer to all is YES! Sega Rally, Daytona and Virtua Cop rival anything on PlayStation as does the excellent VF2 – in a word I love the Saturn!

Looking back, I wish I had just bought a Saturn as my poor PlayStation has not been on since.

Also your magazine is miles better than the official PlayStation mag.

Thanks,
Mark Fearn,
Harborne, B'ham.

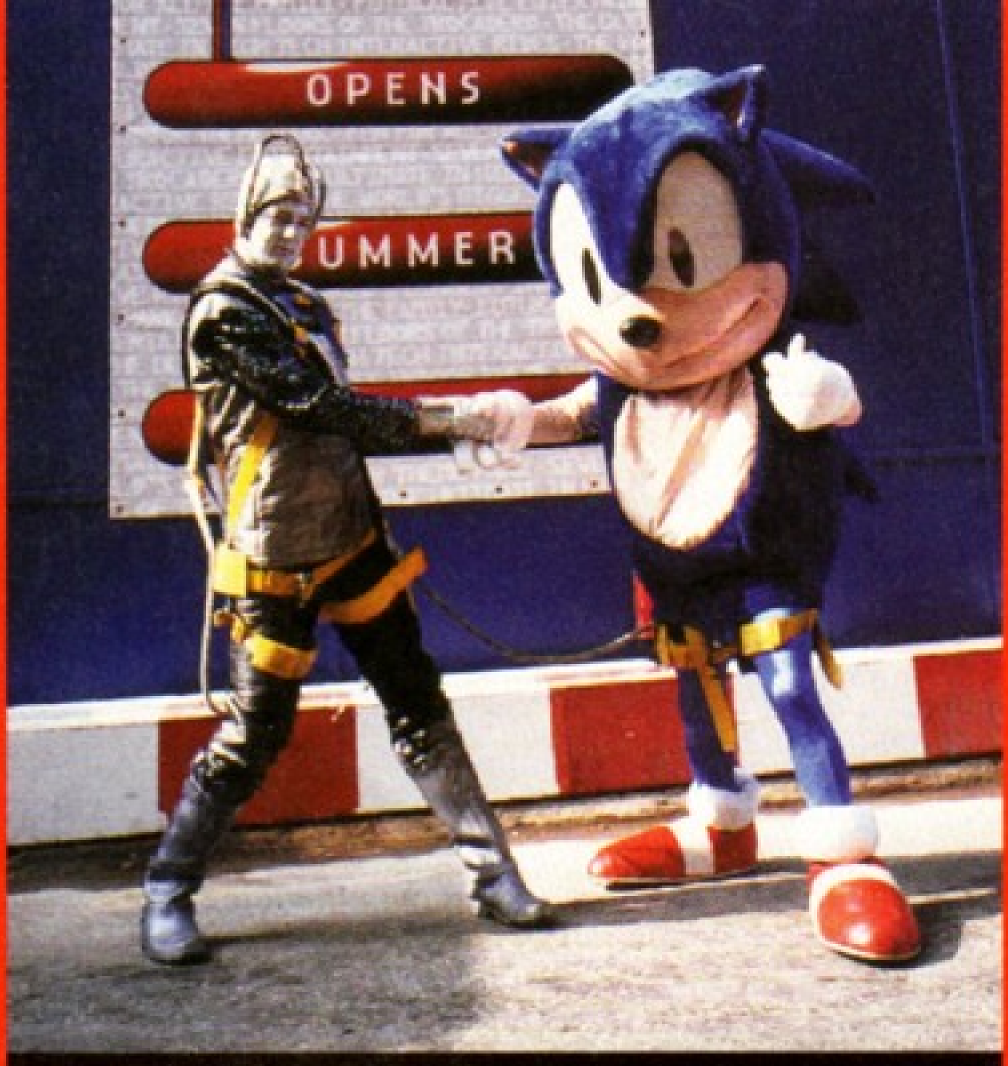
PS Do Sega pay me now or later?



Sega Rally and Virtua Cop; two good reasons to buy a Saturn.

I'm sure Sega would love to pay you, but given that you seem to be in possession of all the money in the world already there's not much point. Still, you can't help being a spawny rich get and it's nice to see a well-balanced letter on the old Sega/Sony argument. Glad you like the Saturn and our humble mag.

Rad photo by David Titlow.



That's Rad on the left in his disco dancing outfit. Very sad.

SEGAWORLD – AND I'VE GOT ME PASS

DEAR SSM,
In issue 7 me and my mate Chris were searching through the pages of your fab mag when we saw Segaworld in another mag. I saw a Sega Bus which took people to Sega's top attractions. Would this include taking people to Segaworld?

Secondly, Chris is getting a Saturn (well, that's what he said anyway) and you being the number one mag, he wanted to know what game to get inbetween Gex and Streetfighter the Movie. Last but not least I am wondering what beat 'em up to get inbetween Streetfighter Alpha, X-Men or Darkstalkers. Thanks for your words of wisdom.

Lee Holland, Burnley, Lancs.

Actually Lee, the Sega Bus doesn't take anyone anywhere, apart from the people who work on it. It's actually a roving Sega attraction which takes games to the masses, not the other way around. Try a train for your Segaworld transportion needs. As for your games dilemma, well we were momentarily confused by your use of "inbetween", but we understand now. So we'd say Gex and Alpha. Although there are better games than Gex, to be honest.

ICE HOCKEY IS BLOODY ACE

DEAR SSM,
I wish to make a stand for all ice hockey supporters in the UK after your blatant slur against our beloved game in issue 7 of your magazine. You stated "about as much popularity as small bore rifle shooting". I know of nine and a half thousand Sheffield Steelers fans that turn out week in week out that would disagree. Also you stated "two teams of five aside playing four quarters" when it is actually two teams of six aside playing three periods. So next time get your facts right before you slag off our new national game.

Yours faithfully Steeler Dan's best mate,
Steven Ellis, Catterick Garrison, N Yorks.

PS Not to mention the sixteen and a half thousand that turned out to watch Manchester Storm at the Nyex Stadium.

Terribly sorry, Steven and all your little Steelers. Of course, that was all Rob's fault, as the rest of us know all about ice hockey and would never make that kind of mistake. So we gave him seven good strokes with the birch. And it's the national sport of Canada, not Britain.



Hockey – it's great really isn't it. Except we're crap at it.

A BEAUTIFUL PERSON WRITES

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE,
Plese print my letter as it is the first time I am writing to your awesome magazine. I am writing in response to a certain Eddie Samme from Bristol who wrote in, in issue 6, and was having trouble getting his Bootleg Sampler CD.

Well I have two CDs, not because I bought two issues of SSM. I had a cousin who worked in Game and he gave me the Bootleg Sampler CD a week before your magazine came out. Then my brother bought the CD edition of your magazine.

So here I am with two Bootleg Sampler CDs. I was hoping you could give it to someone who might get endless fun playing it.

Yours faithfully,
Shahzad Nawaz, Derby.

Good grief Shahzad, you're the most generous reader I've ever had the pleasure to encounter. Instead of just flogging off your second CD for sweets money you're giving it away for the greater good of the SSM community. Well three cheers for you, you're officially our friend. So, Eddie Samme from Bristol, I'm afraid we've lost your address – but write in again enclosing a 'phone number and we'll unite you with your charity-mungous Bootleg Sampler, courtesy of Shahzad. Oh, and please mark your envelope IT'S MY BOOTLEG SAMPLER so we don't lose your communique.

DANGEROUS IDEAS

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAG,
I am a faithful reader of your magazine. In issue 4 I couldn't help but notice the last letter which was talking about Saturn's slow and steady take-off. I myself am a Saturn owner and a very proud one at that. I got my Saturn for my birthday and now have 4 games and your Bootleg Sampler (thank you kindly).

Anyway, couldn't Sega make a 3D graphics chip or something that will make the Saturn more powerful and enable us to play even better games and give more quality game play (if possible) or have a 64-BIT machine like the 32X. I know that I don't know anything about AM2 or AM. In fact I don't even know what AM stands for but if Sega want to hit the mark and kill off PlayStation then they should consider my ideas (if they can be done).

Iam O'Sullivan, Runcorn, Cheshire.

PS Any more news on the keyboard and disk drive for the Saturn?

Given that Sega have just abandoned the 32X, this mightn't be such a good idea. Especially considering the fact that Saturn programmers are nowhere near exploiting the limits of the Saturn technology yet – what's the point in upgrading it now? A few people have suggested this 64X option, and it seems like everyone's just a bit fazed by the impending launch of the Nintendo 64 (if it ever comes out), thinking that their console will suddenly become obsolete and crap. Well just remember that the Jaguar's 64-BIT, and look what happened to that.

'PHONE DIXONS

DEAR SSM,
Please could you help me? I have been having some trouble with my Saturn lately. I am playing for about half and hour and then the screen starts flickering with horizontal lines and the sound occasionally disappears. What do you think is going on? Could it be my TV? I have played games on it for about five years but never had any trouble before. I disconnected everything, cleaned it, left it for a day and then tried again, but the flickering stayed Could it even be the lithium battery? I bought my Saturn in August last year, but the instruction manual says the battery needs replacing after a year, which isn't yet. Do you know where new batteries can be bought in case I need to get one? Do you know of anyone else who has had these troubles, or am I on my tod? I hope you can help. Cheers buddies.

David Anderson, Swindon, Wilts.

Don't ask me, mate – I haven't got a clue. If it's any consolation though I had almost exactly the same trouble with my Megadrive years ago and can sympathise. You're best off calling Sega, or the shop you bought your Saturn from if you've got hardware problems, as we're rarely able to help (and it takes us months, if ever, to get around to answering letters). Sorry about that.

LIGHTS, CAMERA... NO ACTION

DEAR SSM,
Congratulations on being the best console mag ever! I should know, I buy them all. I have been a Saturn owner since August 8th, after my initial disappointment at the lack of games, I am now over the moon with joy.

I have a query. With my Saturn came a nice little booklet which showed NBA Action. Being a mad basketball fan I waited in anticipation. In December Sega sent out some promotional stuff and there was another ad for NBA Action, I waited. In March my PlayStation friends began taunting me with copies of NBA Live. This week I purchased WipeOut and, you guessed it, there was another ad for NBA Action. Does it exist, when is it being released? Does anyone know the answer?

Yours sincerely,
Antony Doherty, New Cross, London.

It was at the E3 and look ace. It is due for release around September time.

Q&A

'In football you've got Gazza, in Brookside you've got Bazza, but if you want the names of those Sega games then you've got to go talk to the Mazza!' Another day, another rhyme, introducing our regular spot with Sega's man in the know, Mark Maslowicz. He's been swanning about E3 sipping champagne and waxing lyrical about the Sega titles emerging this year, now he's back to the grindstone answering your questions. So, if you want to speak to our man on the inside write to SPY GUY, Q & A, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.



IT'S SUPERMAG

Dear SSM,

I would like some answers from your super mag.

1. Why do most next-gen racing games only have between three and six tracks when F1 on the PlayStation will have a huge 17?
2. Any news on Bug! 2?
3. Will there be any football management games on the Saturn?
4. Have Sega any plans to make their own sim game? If not, what do you think about Theme Zoo?
5. With beat 'em ups and racers in abundance on the Saturn, do you think it's time for a change?
6. I like platformers but the ones on the Saturn are too hard, except maybe Clockwork Knight. Do you think there should be some easier games on the Saturn?

Wayne Smith, Highwoods, Colchester.

1 Depends on the detail of the tracks. 2 Due around Christmas with two new playable characters. 3 Probably. 4 No plans. 5 It's already happening. 6 I think the difficulty level is about right.



One of the four courses present in Sega Rally. F1 has seventeen, but it's still not as good. So there.

FIVE WEEK FANATIC

Dear SSM,

I have had a new Saturn for five weeks now and I think it's great. Could you answer a few questions please?

1. I am going to buy a new game soon (and not meaning to boast; have completed VF2 and Virtua Cop on hard mode and expert mode without any cheats, and found this very easy) so what would you suggest for more of a challenge - WipEout, Clockwork Knight 2, Panzer Dragoon 2 or other?
2. I have been playing Sega's arcade machines for three to four years now and I was wondering what machine Sega out in them? Is it an advanced version of the Saturn or a totally different system?
3. I will be going to the USA sometime soon. Can I play American CD's on my English Saturn? If I need a converter, how much are they and where are they to be found?
4. As I have around £100 at the moment I am considering buying the steering wheel for Sega rally or the video CD card or the arcade stick or another gun for VC so my friends can play without the control pad (which quite frankly is boring and dull). Which one would you recommend?
5. All my friends say that my games — VF1, VF2, Sega Rally and Virtua Cop are rubbish compared to PlayStation titles like Tekken, MK3 and Destruction Derby. Is this true?

John Beaumont, Rotherham, Sheffield.

1 If you want challenge try Bug!. 2 Different system apart from games that use STV board. 3 The games will have borders and run slower. Not really worth it. 4 Probably the gun or Arcade Racer. 5 Don't be silly.

MR DORK

Dear SSM,

Can you please answer these dorky questions.

1. Is the Saturn powerful enough to take games like 'Mad Dog McCree' and 'Crime Patrol' at the same quality as the Philips CDI?
2. With or without the M-Peg?
3. If so, are there any plans for these games or games of a similar sort?
4. I should be getting my Saturn within the next few weeks. My mum wants to know if Sega will be releasing a CD with variable games on (puzzles, Connect-4, Cluedo, Card Games etc.).
5. Because there are three games in Die Hard trilogy, will it cost more than other Saturn games.
6. And finally, when is your next playable demo CD due out? I can't wait. What games are planned.

Troy Welch, Leicester.

1 Yes. 2 Without. 3 Corpse Killer is out in the US but wait for Virtua Cop 2. 4 Unlikely, but another company might. 5 No. 6 Be patient my child.

EAGER GEEZER

Dear Sega Saturn Mag,

I own a Sega Saturn which I bought on the first day of release. Since then I have purchased about 13 games, all of which are great apart from Victory Goal!

Anyway, getting straight to the point. The one thing I really wanted on the Saturn was a good basketball game. I must admit, I have been very tempted by the PlayStation since I saw Total NBA, and at one point I eventhought about selling my Saturn. I know this sounds a bit drastic but I'm a desperate man!

I soon came to my senses and decided to wait and see what the Saturn comes up with. I had heard that Sega sports were developing a game called NBA Action. Apparently this was supposed to be released by Christmas last year but I've heard nothing. Please, please, please can you put me out of my misery and tell me roughly when it will be released, and is there a chance that it may match the PlayStations Total NBA. Thanks for your time and keep up the good work on the mag.

Ian Boynton, Crowborough, East Sussex.

NBA Action was shown at the E3 and very well received. While it may not be as flashy as Total NBA, it's a far better game and comes with an NBA licence as well so all of the real players are in there. And plenty of extras too so stop blubbing!

BANK HOLIDAY BLUES

Dear Sega Saturn Mag,

It's bank holiday Monday and I'm really bored so here's a few questions for you;

1. Since ditching my 32X for the fab Saturn I've had withdrawl symptoms from not being able to play Doom and with the PlayStation having such a great version I was wondering when it will be released and what version it will be?
2. Will we see a version of Quake this year?
3. How much longer will we have to wait for Alien Trilogy?
4. I've had WipEout for a month or so now and have only managed to come third in Rapier class on Silverstream. How do I get to play Firestar, the last hidden track? Do I have to come first?

S. Martin, Heaton, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne.

1 Around September/October and as good as PlayStation of course. 2 Hopefully. 3 Septemberish. 4 Yes you do.



Win at WipEout and you can play Firestar, hidden track and one of Spiderman's Amazing Friends.

WIN! The Ultimate Gaming Rig!!

OVER £12,000.00 IN PRIZES!

PANDEMONIUM INCORPORATED



You have the POWER. In this contest you don't rely on the luck-of-the draw. You determine if you win or not. You win by outscoring others in a game of skill. Can you solve the puzzle below? Then you have what it takes. It looks simple, but it's only the start. Each of five more puzzles gets a little harder. But this time it's all up to you. Stay in to the end with the highest score and the gear is yours. With whatever options you want. Do you have what it takes? Then play to win!

Computer Contest. Win a blazing fast computer with Pentium 200 Mhz processor, 16 meg. ram, 1.2 Gig. hard drive, CD-ROM, 17" monitor, modem and more!

Video Game Contest. Play on the hi-tech cutting edge with this line-up: Sony Playstation; Sega Saturn; Virtual Boy; 3DO; and Atari Jaguar. Get all five or trade the ones you don't want for CA$H! Bonus options include: 33 inch monitor, £1,000 in games, cash, accessories and more!

Media Rig Contest. The Ultimate Gaming Environment, 40 inch monitor, 130 watt receiver w/ Dolby Pro Logic Surround Sound, and all components shown. Win Satellite Receiver as a BONUS OPTION! This rig will blow you away!!

We're talkin' GAMING HEAVEN!

Directions. Fill in the Mystery Word Grid with words going across that spell out the Mystery Word down the side. Hint: use the Mystery Word Clue.

In the future. There will be four more puzzles at £2.00 each and one tie-breaker at £1.00 which will be sent to you by mail. You will have 3 weeks to solve each puzzle. We don't know how many will play but typically 55% will have the highest score possible score to Phase I, 43% to Phase II, 36% to Phase III, and 32% to Phase IV. The tie-breaker determines the winner. If players are still tied they will split the value of the grand prize they are playing for.

Mystery Word Grid

						MYSTERY WORD
	H					___
		E				___
P	I	N	C	H		W
	R					___
S						___

WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

PINCH .....W	PRESS ....K	BLAST ......A	WRECK .....D
BREAK ......Z	PUNCH .....S	SPRAY C	TURBO V
STOMP .....T	STAND ......R	PRESS ....E	DREAM ....O
CRUSH I	SCORE .....H	SLANT L	CHASE......P

MYSTERY WORD CLUE:
WORLD RULERS HAVE IT AND IN THIS CONTEST YOU HAVE IT

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VIRTUA COP 2
SPECIAL POLICE
POLICE
POLICE

The sentence is Death



Guns, as we all know, are evil and should be banned. But only real guns. Not the brightly-coloured obviously pretend guns you can get for the Saturn. These, in fact, should be venerated, because they're ace. And if you're lucky enough to have one, here's the best news you'll have heard since... um... Virtua Cop.

Virtua City is in peril once again. Despite having wasted every single living criminal on planet Earth on their last outing, the Virtua Cops aren't ready to hang up their holsters just yet. There's a new gang in town waking babies, pinching sweets and knocking on doors then running away. You might not think that sounds so bad – and indeed it isn't. But this infantile mischief is merely a cover for the real action – an army of arms smugglers and armed robbers in armoured cars plotting to take over the town, having moved in from nearby Polygonton. This time out VCPD partners Rayge and Smarty are joined by tough-talking lady cop Janet Marshall. She doesn't actually appear to do anything in the game, except maybe drive the car in the first level, but it must be nice for them to have a bit of company.





Of course, tough-talking Janet isn't the only company the cops are keeping. They're also accompanied on their adventures by a multitude of evil hoods armed with guns, knives and chandeliers. But they're not going to get any nice fancy-dress costumes sewn for them by these less salubrious companions. They're going to have to pull out their brightly-hued shooters again and commence with the slaughter. Ho hum, it's a dog's life as an armed copper in Virtua City.



Scatter those perps across the road like crisp packets and dog poops, oh Cop of Virtua City.



Once again Virtua Cop 2 takes place over three levels, each set in a different locale. However, unlike the original game only one of these is within the confines of Virtua City. The second and third stages take your Cops on a luxury cruise to a mystery foreign destination, although it's something of a working vacation with plenty of shooting involved in the trip.

At the moment the Saturn cousins of the arcade rozzers are trapped on the streets of their home town, as only one level of the >>



>> conversion is complete to a playable degree. This was on display at the E3 show, where onlookers were stunned senseless by its brilliance. Well, perhaps that's a slight exaggeration, but it's clear that the conversion team haven't been idling since starting work this January. In fact, when certain members of the SSM team saw a video taken at the show it took them a while to cotton on that it wasn't the coin-op on screen. The secret to Cop 2 looking so pleasant is the lovely texture mapping, which makes this game look even smoother than the last. We've been assured that the other levels will be of the same high quality. Which is fairly obvious really. It's not like you'd expect one brilliant level and then two levels filled with black-and-white stick-men with only two frames of animation.

Anyway, a more advanced demo version is winging its way to Euro shores in the near future, so you can rest assured that we'll get our hands on it as soon as it enters the country – whereupon we'll pounce wolverine-like upon it, take loads of pictures and put them in the mag like the wild savage games journos we are. Till next month, peace keeping dudes.



If I went out dressed in awful trousers and a jacket like that I'd wear a mask too.



And I'd also shoot anyone who made any comments about it, like this bloke does.

JAM SANDWICH PURSUIT SHOCKER!

Everyone likes a good car chase from Starsky and his pal Hutch through to new super-cops like Mel Gibson in his Lethal Weapon incarnation. Even the cast of The Bill have been known to indulge in a spot of the old flashing lights and sirens ahoy pursuit action. Just because the Virtua Cops aren't real there's no reason they shouldn't get the chance to put pedal to the metal too. They'll be pleased to hear, then, that the very first level of their second outing has them scoot through Virtua City in the back of a fast-moving pursuit car. Luckily the players don't have to steer this vehicle, which would be a bit hard with guns, but they do have to kill the fleets of chauffeured vandals by shooting their tiny heads through the windows of their transport. Some of them helpfully lean out of the car to shoot at you, presenting you with a larger target, but many remain in the confines of the motor, blasting away. And of course there are loads of poor old civilian cars caught in the melee. Try not to kill them all.



The new level environments for Virtua Cop 2 provide ever more ingenious places for your enemies to hide in.







THE LEFT-HAND PATH

Remember those old Choose Your Own Adventure books, where each page offered up to THREE incredible options of other pages to turn to to advance the plot? No? Well you're lucky because they were pretty crap. You'd be better off reading a proper book to be honest. Cop 2, however, has taken a tip from Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone's literary efforts and now offers a choice of plot direction PER LEVEL. Which is the best of both worlds, as you don't have to keep fiddling around with pages, but you do get some say over the course of the game AND it gives you more reason to play through again once you've completed every stage.

Basically, once certain episodes of the game are completed a couple of sign posts appear on screen. Which one of these you shoot with your gun dictates which route the action takes. No matter which path you select you'll begin the next level in the same place (if you last that long), but the challenges you face up until that point are totally different.









Black vans are the last retreat of either crap rock bands or dangerous villains. Either way to best thing do upon encountering one is to shoot all the occupants with your bright plastic Virtua gun. NB: Don't do it in real life.



SO WHAT'S NEXT?

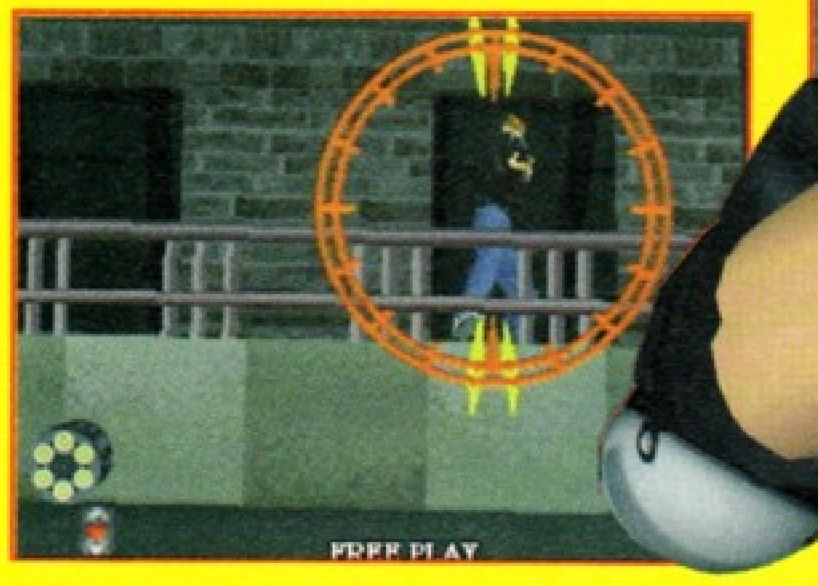
The second and third levels of Cop 2 are well underway, but Sega are reluctant to show them off until they're playable and have their bugs ironed out. Hopefully we should have some shots of these stages in the next issue of SSM. Not that we care, though, because we've already spoiled the surprise for ourselves by playing the coin-op non-stop for about a million years In the interests of research, you understand, not because we like slacking off in arcades pretending we're working or anything. Oh no. We're far too honest for that. Anyway, because we know what happens in the rest of the game and you might not, unless you're similarly inclined towards virtual violence, we thought we'd tell you a bit about what to expect in the rest of the game, and accompany this information with a few shots from the arcade original. So these are ARCADE SHOTS, right? NOT SATURN – ARCADE.

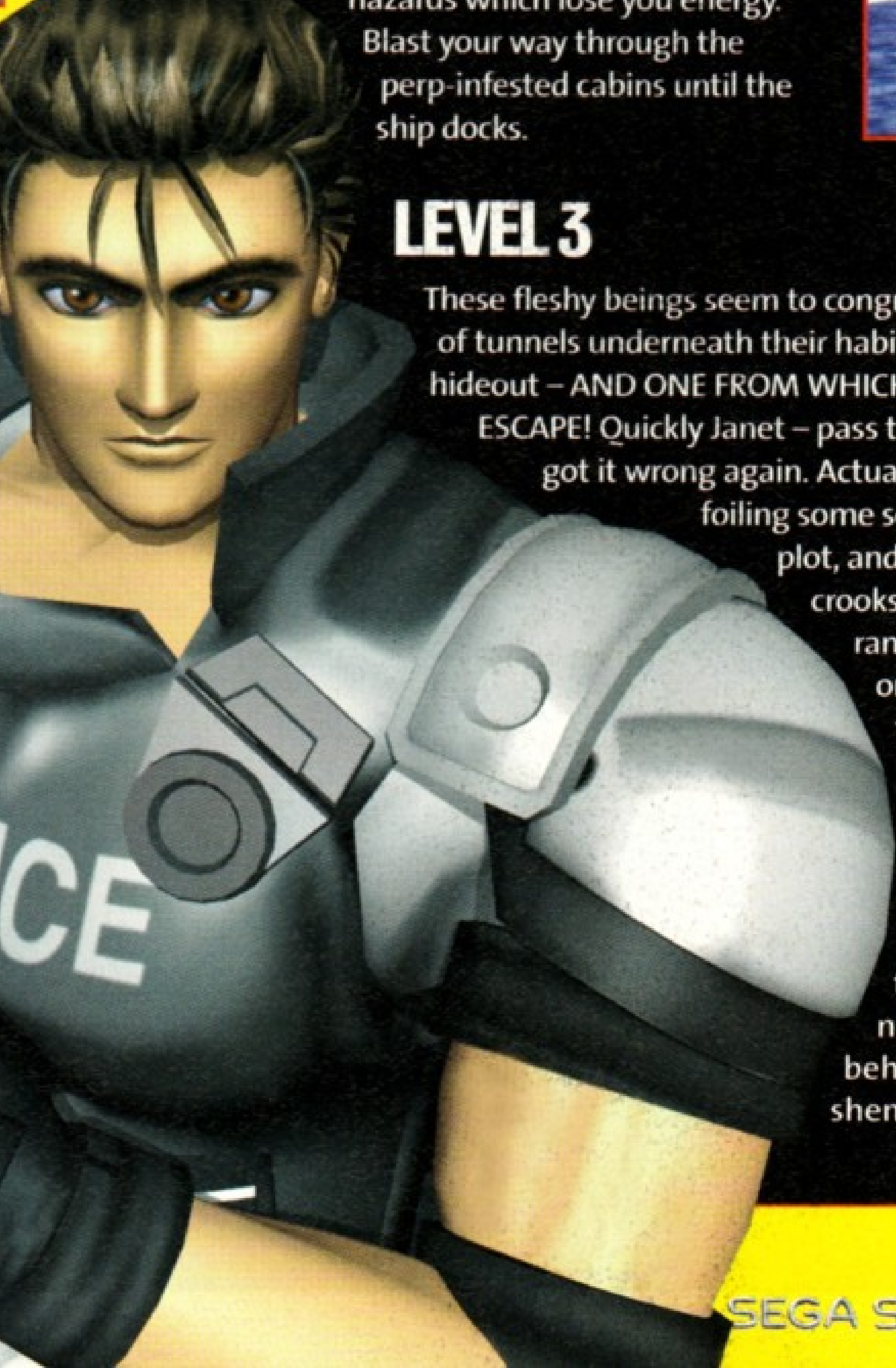
LEVEL 2

As the Cops have killed everyone in Virtua City, they decide it's time to venture to pastures new, where they'll find fresh sport for their culling skills. Ha ha! How those unsuspecting denizens of the Virtua Islands will run screaming as the flesh showers down from the rooftops! Well, almost. Actually they're on the trail of some vicious smuggling types who've booked themselves onto a top-whack cruise liner. Lots of holiday-making passengers mean lots of Penalty Shot hazards which lose you energy. Blast your way through the perp-infested cabins until the ship docks.









LEVEL 3

These fleshy beings seem to congregate in the mazes of tunnels underneath their habitat, an intriguing hideout – AND ONE FROM WHICH THERE IS NO ESCAPE! Quickly Janet – pass the dum-dums! Sorry, got it wrong again. Actually, the V Cops are foiling some sort of sinister bomb plot, and the are trailing the crooks to their subterranean lair which can only be accessed via the underground railway system. This means pegging it through a number of underground stations in a bid to track down the nefarious boss behind all of these evil shenanigans.

X-PECT THE X-TREME!



One of the big attractions at the E3 was the chance to see Sega's number one sprite do his stuff. That's right! Sonic is back, and in Sonic X-Treme he's made the leap into 3D. Now at last we can know the truth: from the front and back, is he as skinny as a sheet of paper?

In our last issue we brought you stop press news on the new Sonic game. At the time we knew very little about it, apart from the fact that it's in 3D and would be called Sonic X-Treme. At the E3 in Los Angeles, Sega actually had a working demo going, showing off what you can expect from this much anticipated title. Despite the fact that there weren't any enemies in it yet, players had the chance to get a feel of what it's going to be like controlling Sonic in a run-anywhere 3D environment. In fact, that's about all you could do, with Sonic acting more like a tourist guide, showing off some of the settings you can expect from the new game.











The team responsible for the latest Sonic installment are STI (Sega Technical Institute), and many of them have been involved in previous Sonic games. Headed by the game's producer Mike Wallis, they've been working on the game non-stop the past few months, looking to Autumn as a potential deadline. Let's hope so!

SO WHAT'S NEW?

Obviously the 3D makes quite a difference, enabling Sonic to move in absolutely any direction that takes his fancy. There are some changes as far as his moves are concerned as well. The spindash move is still there, but there's now another vaguely similar move called the spinslash. This sees Sonic perform a mid-air 360° attack with his spikes jutting assertively outwards. We don't know, but we presume this kind of attack will be more lethal than the regular spin attack. Another of Sonic's new skills is the ability to throw rings rather than just collect them to protect himself. Pretty great eh?



He's blue! He's spiky! It can only be Sonic the Hedgehog, back for more in 3D!









ALSO STARRING

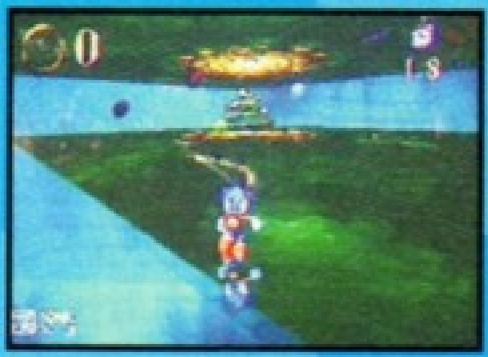
So are there any familiar faces in there? In short, yes, largely in the shape of the ever malevolent Dr. Robotnik. This time his thirst for evil sees him after the six magical Rings of Order. They are currently kept under the watchful eye of the benign Professor Gazebo Boobowski and his daughter, Tiara B. However, after one failed attempt by Robotnik to steal them, Sonic steps in. Thus the plot sees Sonic hunting down the six Rings of Order, getting help along the way from the Professor and his daughter and generally doing all the things you'd expect of a superhero.

Apart from Dr. Robotnik, it looks like all the other characters will be newly created, as are all the settings taking in the likes of Jade Gully and Crystal Frost.



Looking pretty good isn't it? There'll be more coverage in the next issue!



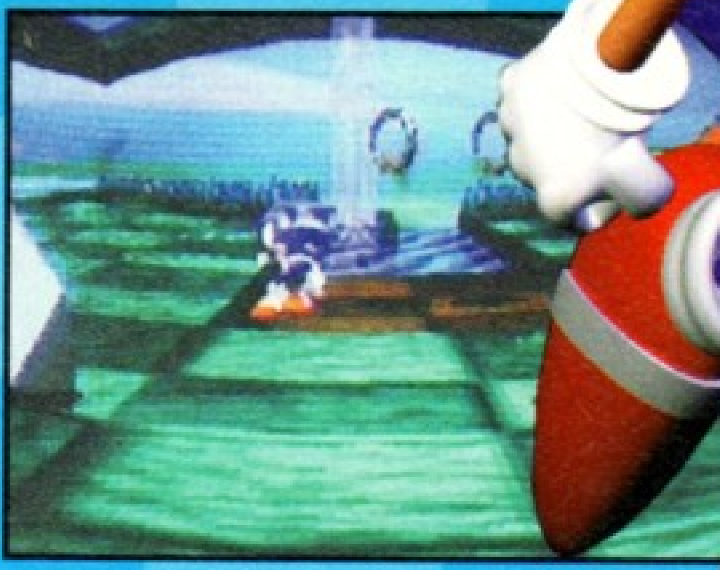












The demo on show at the E3 was pretty basic but you can be sure there's a lot more to come yet.



INTERVIEW

It wasn't only games on show at the E3, some of their creators were too, answering the questions of humble journalists and generally smooching about looking important. One of the most important is unquestionably Mike Wallis, the producer heading up the team working on Sonic X-Treme. We got a chance to speak to him and this is what he said:

SSM: Could you sum up what's going to make this Sonic game different from ones in the past.

MW: Obviously with Sonic X-Treme, 3D Sonic is free to move around in a completely open 3D environment. Previously on the 2D games things were restricted to a very linear path, where as now he can run around in the open without any restrictions to his path. The 360° rotation allows for new aspects to the gameplay. It means that Sonic can now do things like run from a wall onto the ceiling and explore lots of new hidden areas.

SSM: Can he do that anywhere?

MW: At this point in time it is going to be set up through the levels. The idea is to make specific areas 'hot spots' that will trigger off this kind of rotation, although we're still thinking about that.

SSM: Are the main Sonic characteristics still going to be in there, things like collecting rings, wizzing about really fast and all that?

MW: Yep, very fast, awesome graphics.

SSM: And will it have the same duel level of play, like you can choose between rushing through it really quickly or take your time and search everywhere?

MW: There are three acts and within each act we have it set so that it emphasises a certain part of the game so, one part might be very fast and another might incorporate more exploration or a lot more puzzle solving.

SSM: Will there be bonus levels in the game?

MW: Yes, there will. The gameplay in these sections will be of a similar nature, as it was in previous Sonic games.

SSM: Are people who were previously involved in Sonic involved in Sonic X-Treme?

MW: I wasn't but many people on my team, STI (Sega Technical Institute) were. They worked on Sonic 2, Sonic 3 and Sonic and Knuckles.

SSM: How do you think it's going to measure up to something like Mario on the NU64?

MW: Well, it all comes down to gameplay and in Sonic games this has always been very refined. I'm working with a great team and so I'm confident that we are really going to do Sonic justice.

SSM: Do you think there's still a place for 2D games?

MW: Yea I do, although with Sonic X-Treme I think it benefits from having a free environment. It's a bit like Nights in that way I guess.

SSM: Are you using the Sega Graphics Library to create the game?

MW: Yes.

SSM: Does that make it easier to make things possible?

MW: In certain ways yea, but it also involves restrictions with certain programmes so we've actually created our own versions, but the demo here at the E3 is actually running with SGL.

SSM: Do you think that there'll be new things you can do in future Sonic games on the Saturn?

MW: In the future possibly, but right now we're utilising everything we can to put in this game and trying to push the hardware to its limit.

SSM: How many people do you have working on the team.

MW: About 15 or so.

SSM: Do you feel there's a lot of pressure on you as the producer of the game?

MW: Absolutely. The whole team is well aware of Sonic's stature and we're not going to put out anything less than what the fans expect.

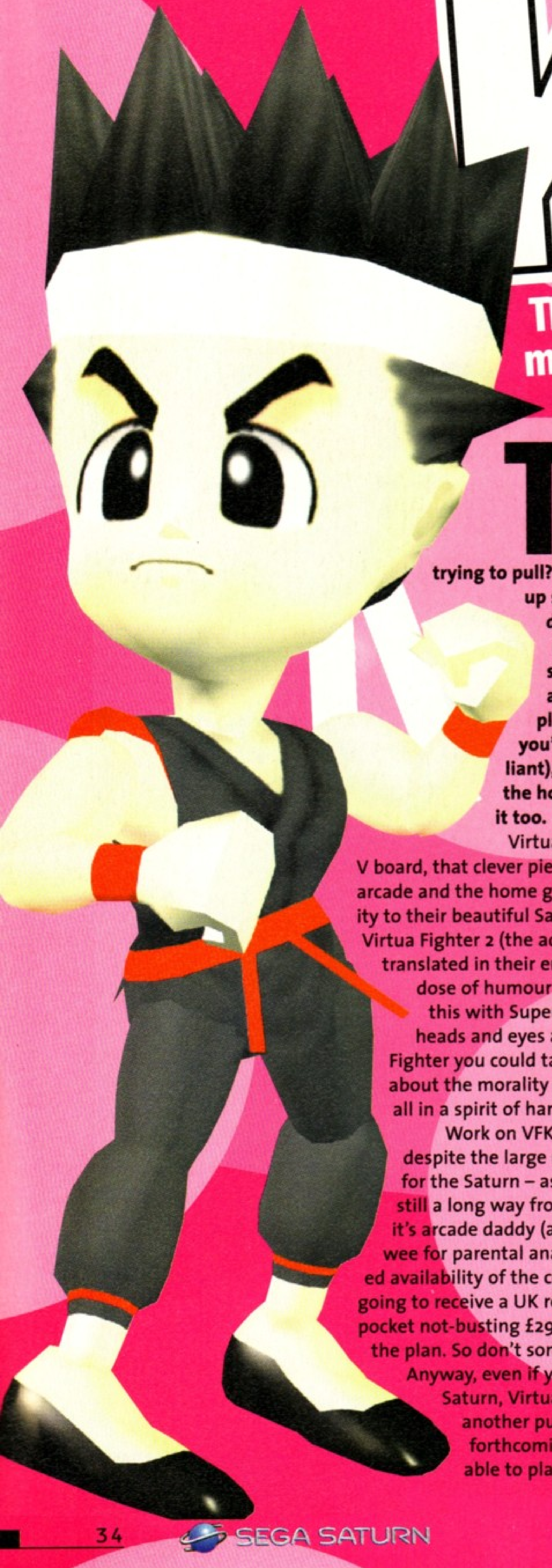
SSM: When do you expect to have it complete?

MW: It should be ready by around Autumn time.



Teenage kicks

The funniest fighting game featuring children of the year is making the big leap to Saturn. SSM have seen the conversion running, and here's where they tell you a bit about it...



Three months ago suggesting the concept of a Virtua Fighter Kids game would have had you laughed right out of town. "What on Earth have you been reading?" people would have mocked, "What kind of pretence is this you're trying to pull?" they would have scorned. Well if you did make up something like that to impress your friends, doubtless you'll be feeling fully smugged-up right now, because AM2 came up with the same awesome idea, and the fruits of their tireless labour are now on their way to the Saturn. If you haven't played Virtua Fighter Kids in the arcade and feel you're missing out (which you are, because it's brilliant), fear not, because SSM have the first pictures of the home conversion, and very lovely looking indeed is it too.

Virtua Fighter Kids if one of the first products of the ST-V board, that clever piece of trickery developed by Sega to bring the arcade and the home game closer together, thanks to its inherent similarity to their beautiful Saturn console. The game itself is tied inexorably to Virtua Fighter 2 (the adult edition), with the same moves and combos translated in their entirety. However, a large and undeniably healthy dose of humour has been added to the proceedings by marrying this with Super-Deformed junior characters (ie – they've got big heads and eyes and look all cute and innocent). It's the Virtua Fighter you could take home to mother. And, in case you're wondering about the morality of watching small children beat each other up, it's all in a spirit of harmless playfulness and no-one really gets hurt.

Work on VFK has been progressing at a great rate of knots – despite the large number of top-class conversions also in progress for the Saturn – as these shots attest. Whilst the version pictured is still a long way from finished it's already looking incredibly similar to it's arcade daddy (although perhaps the protagonists are a little too wee for parental analogies). Sega have assured that, despite the limited availability of the coin-op over here, Virtua Fighter Kids is DEFINITELY going to receive a UK release and... AND, right... it'll probably retail at a pocket not-busting £29.99. Final details are yet to be decided, but that's the plan. So don't some moaning to us if it doesn't work out that way. Anyway, even if you've already got every Virtua Fighting title for the Saturn, Virtua Fighter Kids looks novel enough to warrant another purchase. We look forward to telling you about it in a forthcoming review – because that means we'll have been able to play it for ages.





You can't deny that the characters in Virtua Fighter Kids look very cute and sweet. Not unlike those kind of ceramic collector figures you see advertised in the glossy magazine supplements in the sunday papers. Except for the fact that these ones fight. And don't cost about two thousand quid.



The great thing about Virtua Fighter Kids retaining all the original moves from Virtua Fighter 2 is the extra comedy element of watching the little 'uns bash each other with amazing kung-fu master techniques. Well, I think it's funny anyway.







WATCH YOUR POSTURE

Martial artists are known for their showing off. This is because no-one will deride them for it in case they get hurt. And, just to display the arrogance of youth, even the losers of the Kids games have a little routine to garner sympathy. Providing they're conscious (ie they lose by a Ring Out or Time Over). That's just like children that is, giving you all that doe eyes treatment so you'll give them some chocolate cake or buy them a toy. Well it won't work in VF Kids, that's for sure. No, all it'll do is encourage your opponents to kick you in all over again – possibly harder than last time. That's because the winners also have snazzy victory poses where they show off even more. As you do.

YOUTH OF TODAY

So what's all this Kids business about then? Well, as eagle-readers will no doubt have noticed, the characters in VFK look somewhat more cute and winsome than the usual combatants. That's because they're supposed to be children, despite the sporting of facial hair amongst those prematurely-mature members of the cast. They have, in keeping with the proportions of babies, big heads and eyes, with tiny weeny bodies. However, they also have the martial arts abilities of ninja masters five times their age, capable of pulling off all the moves from Virtua Fighter 2. Victory brings pretty flowers! The sweeties.







EASY THERE, JUNIOR

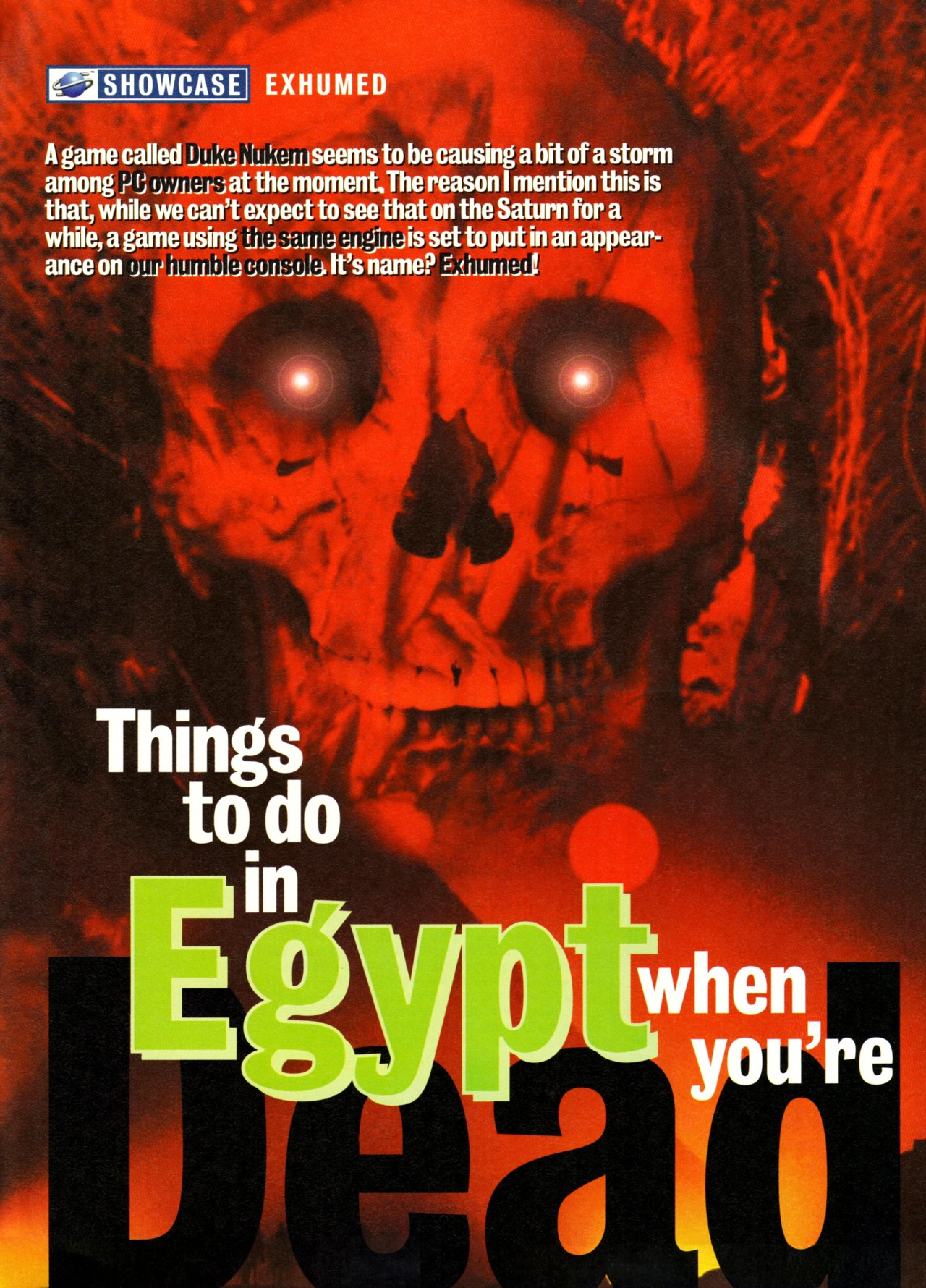
One of the new Saturn-only developments for the Kids conversion will be of particular interest to the younger readers we don't have. Still, you might have children of your own who'll care. There are plans to include a special play option for junior fighters, obviously entering into the youthful spirit of the game. This will cut the number of moves available to the characters, but also simplify the techniques required to perform those that are left. So if you're only wee or you're crap at games you'll still be able to look like a Virtua Fighter master. Not recommended for learning how to play though, as you'll have to re-learn all the moves again when you graduate to the grown-up version.





A game called Duke Nukem seems to be causing a bit of a storm among PC owners at the moment. The reason I mention this is that, while we can't expect to see that on the Saturn for a while, a game using the same engine is set to put in an appearance on our humble console. It's name? Exhumed!

Things to do in Egypt when you're Dead



Exhumed

If I had a penny for every letter and phone call we've had asking when Doom is coming out on the Saturn, I'd have enough money to buy a packet of crisps, a chocolate bar and refreshing fizzy drink by now. That's right, about 98p! But while I lament lost snacks, there is a chance for all those first-person perspective death and dismemberment fans to relax a bit with the arrival of BMG's Exhumed. This is looking every bit as impressive as the id legend; just as expansive, just as challenging and just as packed with enemies that make a satisfying mess of themselves when you pump a few rounds into their demonic bodies!

The theme in Exhumed is not exactly watch-with-mother material either; there you are, a gun-totting, sword-swiping, magic-marauding coffin breaker, wandering about the ancient tombs and towns of Egypt in search of the mummified remains of King Ramsses. It seems an unknown force has sacked his resting place leaving only his disgruntled spirit to nag at you and offer the occasional clue as the the mysterious forces at work among the ruins. Naturally there are plenty of ghostly mutant types out to drain your brains, be they Anubis guards (you know, the ones with the dogs-head masks), giant red spiders, crows, mutant flies and the occasional gargantuan demon with too many eyes and very scary sharp claws. Brrrr!

Exhumed has already put in an appearance at the E3 in the shape of a demo disc, although being an American version it came under a different title, that of Power Slave. But Exhumed is the title that we in Blighty can expect, and a much better one it is too.

Your journey begins on the back of your trusty steed, well, camel actually. As far as carrying weapons goes though, you have to do all that yourself because you never know when you might need them. There are a total of eight in all ranging from the standard pistol to a magical ring. As you wander about you'll find health and weapons power-ups, but more importantly you also discover artifacts and keys which help you gain access to the deepest recesses of the ancient tombs and offer clues as to the whereabouts of your chosen dead body. And that's basically it. Obviously, we'll bring you all the news on further developments as we get them but for now you can at least see that with the arrival of Exhumed, it's not all 'Doom and gloom' really is it? Hahahaha! Ahh, it's the way I tell 'em.

















Oh yes. Even the ancient Egyptians had a branch of Allied carpets you know.







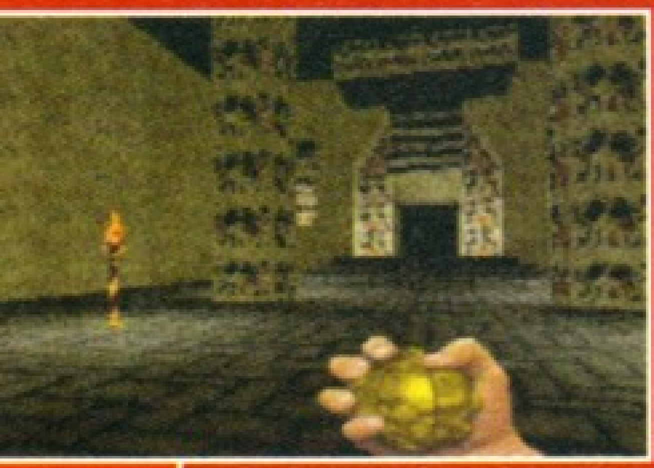


Wow! Check out that light sourcing! Exhumed is full of brilliant effects like this, oh yes indeed!









PYROGLIPHICS

As the player explores the different environments they gradually come into possession of different weapons. There are total of eight in all, and just for you, here they are in all their combustive glory;

SWORD: The sword is what you start out with and it's actually pretty useless, although because it's simply a hand weapon you don't have to worry about replenishing ammo or anything. Use it only as a last resort.

PISTOL: The pistol is quite good for taking out smaller enemies like crows and spiders, or for blasting apart vases and cauldrons. For tougher enemies you'll want to switch to a more formidable weapon.

M60 MACHINE GUN: This is where things start to get a bit more interesting. A machine gun obviously has the advantage of filling enemies with lots of bullets, one after the other. But beware using the ammo up too fast with this weapon.

GRENADE: If you've got a batch of nasty spiders huddled together why not toss in a grenade to destroy them all! Grenades are best used on the harder enemies. You can also alter the throwing distance and so take out enemies far away.













In the American version known as Power Slave, the gore will be toned down. In the European version however, there'll be even more enemies and loads more blood! Whether it will come with a certificate is still not decided as yet. We'll let you know.

FLAMETHROWER:
Fun fun fun!
The flamethrower is the ideal weapon for burning things - probably because it throws flames. Because a flame spreads out over a wide area the flamethrower is perfect for difficult targets like flies.



COBRA STAFF: Kind of an odd weapon this. Tiny green snakes are summoned by the staff which then go slithering off to seek out targets. They then explode, showing off some lovely green light sourcing I might add.



RING OF RA: Yes it is a sad name but a powerful magic ring all the same. Wearing this ring, a quick 'juss like that' shake of the hands releases tiny red fireballs which bounce about and then go up in red puffs of smoke.



MANACLE: Perhaps even more tasteless than the ring, the manacle is nevertheless deadly powerful. A concentrated tensing of the right hand and hey presto a sheet of white lightning is released which utilises load of energy.




















On the left is the symbol that increases the amount of health you have.






Lots of glow in the dark effects show themselves off throughout Exhumed. By shooting the vases you'll obtain pick-ups that improve either your health or your supply of ammo for the weapon you're using at the time. Dead enemies also leave pick-ups.

EYGPT-ENEMY

The copy we have been using only features five of the twenty-seven expected levels in Exhumed. The developers not only plan to put in more enemies to grapple with but there's also that fact that some particular types of enemy will only be revealed in later levels. For now though, here's a look at a few of the ones we encountered:

RED SPIDER: Not exactly spiders really because they've only got six legs but they move and jump like them anyway. They tend to hang about in gangs which makes them more of a nuisance. However, a few blasts with the pistol should see them turn to mush.

CROWS: These might not be crows, but in any case they're black and fly like birds. As they soar in towards you a few well aimed rounds with the pistol are enough to make them a feathery mess.

GIANT FLY: These can be a real pain, especially when there's a swarm of them. You might want to make use of the machine gun or else the flamethrower to get rid of them. If they're in a pack though, try throwing a grenade in there.

ANUBIS GUARD: These are humans with the infamous dog masks of Anubis. Being strange supernatural types they throw blue fireballs. Tackle these from a distance if possible, using either the machine gun or pistol.

SHE-LION: To begin with these particularly crafty types stand like innocent statues. Approach them however and they spring into life, burrowing into the ground and popping up where you least expect them with claws blazing.

RED SPIDER



CROW



GIANT FLY



ANUBIS GUARD



SHE-LION





WHO ARE THESE GUYS?

Although BMG will be taking on the licence for Exhumed in America as Sega will be doing in Britain, the actual team behind the game is an oddly titled bunch called Lobotomy Software Inc. Essentially it's three blokes by the name of Paul Lange, Dane Emerson and Brian Anderson, who all worked for Nintendo of America before their perilous defection. Starting out in 1993 with nothing more than a desire to make top notch games, they now have a further 21 people beavering away in the name of Lobotomy. If Exhumed is the standard of software we can expect from them then they'll definitely be a name to watch for in the future.



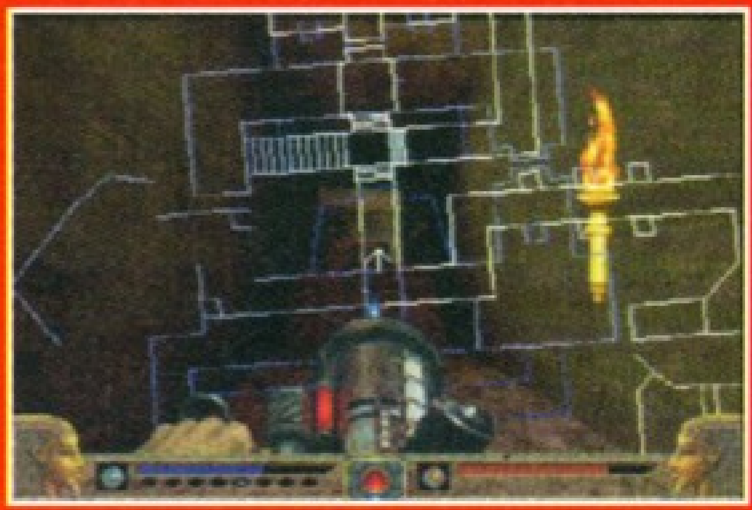
An Anubis guard explodes! Yipeeee!



Inside this tomb you'll find Ramsses' spirit.



Why not let yourself go with the machine gun!



Here's the map to help you through the levels.



Somehow you've landed in water!



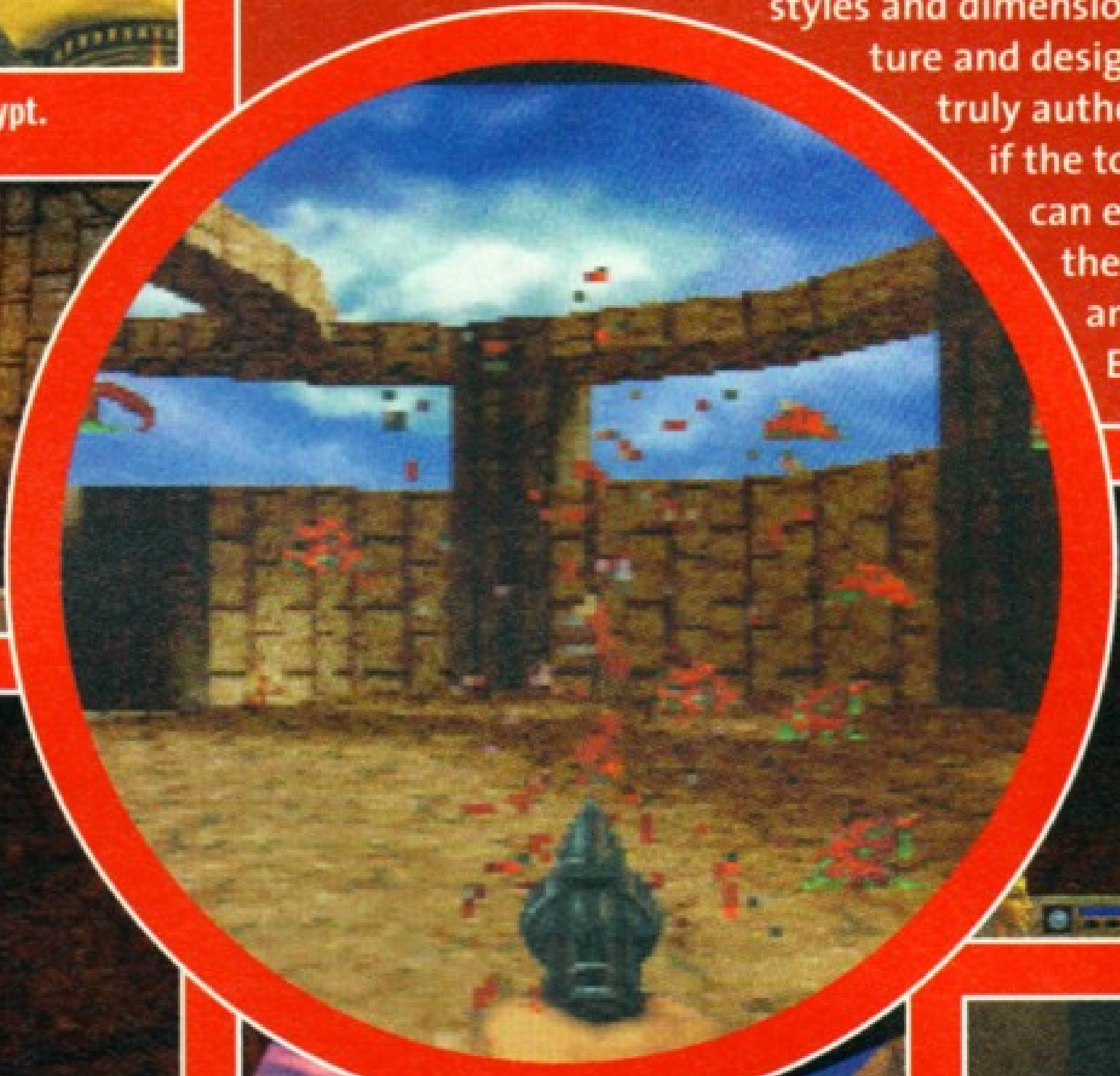
Karnak doen't exist in the real Egypt.

DIMENSIONS OF THE STARS

No doubt all of you Eygptologists will be scratching your heads and searching through your books in search of somewhere called Karnak. Well ancient culture boffins, you may as well put the book down now because Karnak doesn't exist, neither in ancient or modern Egypt. Despite this fact, the programmers have spent considerable time researching the styles and dimensions of Egyptian architecture and design in an effort to create a truly authentic atmosphere. So even if the town itself is fictional you can expect lots of sandstone, the sparse elegant temples and the labyrinthian tombs Egypt is famous for.









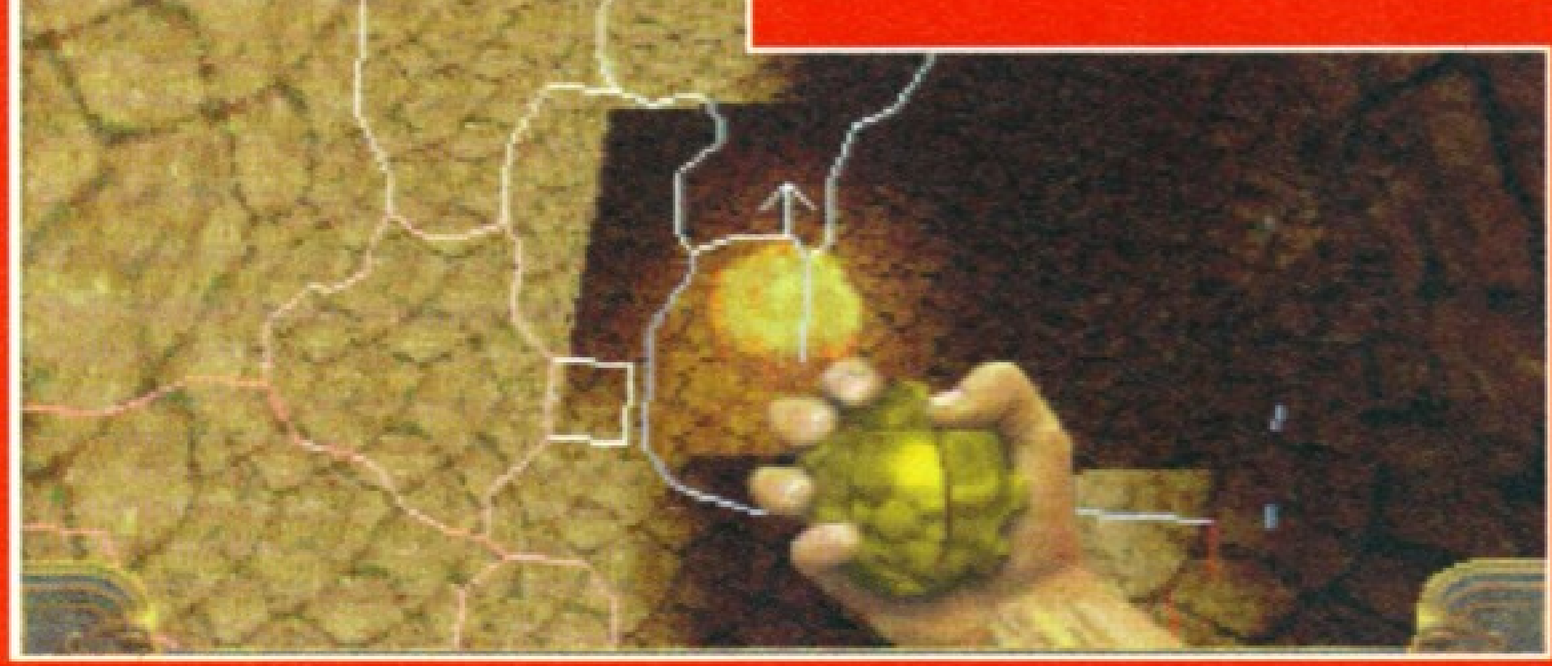












A BIT LIKE

Comparisons with Doom are inevitable and the screenshots will tell you just how similar the two games are. The main differences are thematic. Rather than entering a kind of netherworld dominated by hellish demons, you enter an Egyptian world dominated by hellish demons...ok, so it's not really that different. In fact most of the weapons are the same too, although Exhumed again stresses the Egyptian theme by including weird stuff like a cobra staff and magic ring. There are also rumours that Exhumed is faster than Doom is going to be, but obviously this is not something we can genuinely judge until Doom eventually turns up.



To your right is a screenshot of Doom on the PlayStation. The Saturn version is still hiding away somewhere, but with Exhumed looking so good it's taken some of the steam out of it.

RITZY'S OR HADES?

Fancy a bit of useless information? Well, you're going to get some anyway. Anubis, the character that turns up with the dog's mask, is a genuine Egyptian god. To be precise it's not strictly a dog, more a mixture between dog and jackal. According to Egyptian myth Anubis guards stood at the gates of Hades, the place that Egyptians believed they went after death. Pharaohs and other eminent types would be buried with their treasures because it was believed they'd pass more favourably through the Gates of Hades. It's kind of like slipping a bouncer a few quid to let you into an exclusive night club. Kind of.





Hey there brothers and sisters. Now listen up and listen good. There 'aint no point in discovering life beyond the stars if you can't even look at life in your back yard, you know what I'm saying? We gotta get together to get it together! Ok now people, cue the Marvin and cut to the soul!

ARCHEOLOGY PSYCHOLOGY

Exhumed is the kind of game where progress involves going back over places you've already been, perhaps with new weapons so you can blast through walls or locked doors, and thus access areas that were otherwise restricted. There are also specific items to pick up that will help you out like the Scarab Bracelet which enables you to cross an area that is poisonous, or pick-ups which act as symbols of earth and health among other things. The point is - search everywhere!

There are lots of very dank and scary places in Exhumed. I suggest you play it with a friend, and with the lights on.





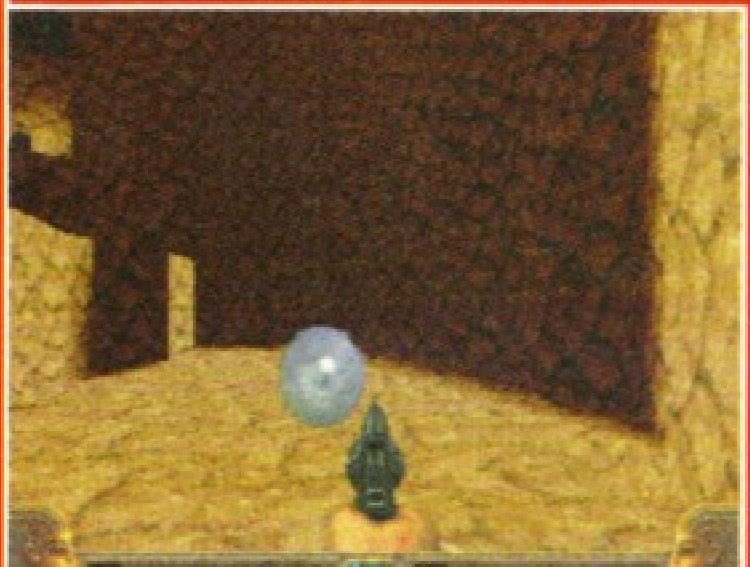




It's worth firing a few rounds into the walls now and then because Exhumed contains lots of secret passageways. There are also some puzzle elements that involve you having the right weapon or some kind of artifact in order for you to progress. Of course, most of it is good ole' death and dismemberment so there's plenty to be happy about.

MISTY-EYED

The two essential power-ups in Exhumed are for your weapons and health and they look a bit like giant cloudy eyes. The bars for each of these are displayed along the bottom of the screen. Rather than the weapon power-up being general, each weapon has its own amount of ammo. What this means is that if you're about to collect a weapon power-up it will apply to the weapon you're using at that time. So before you do it's worth flicking through your arsenal to see what weapons are in most immediate need of replenishing. There are loads of places you'll find health and weapon power-ups. Blasting vases and statues nearly always reveals them and often, when you destroy an enemy, they'll leave one behind as well. Collect and be merry!



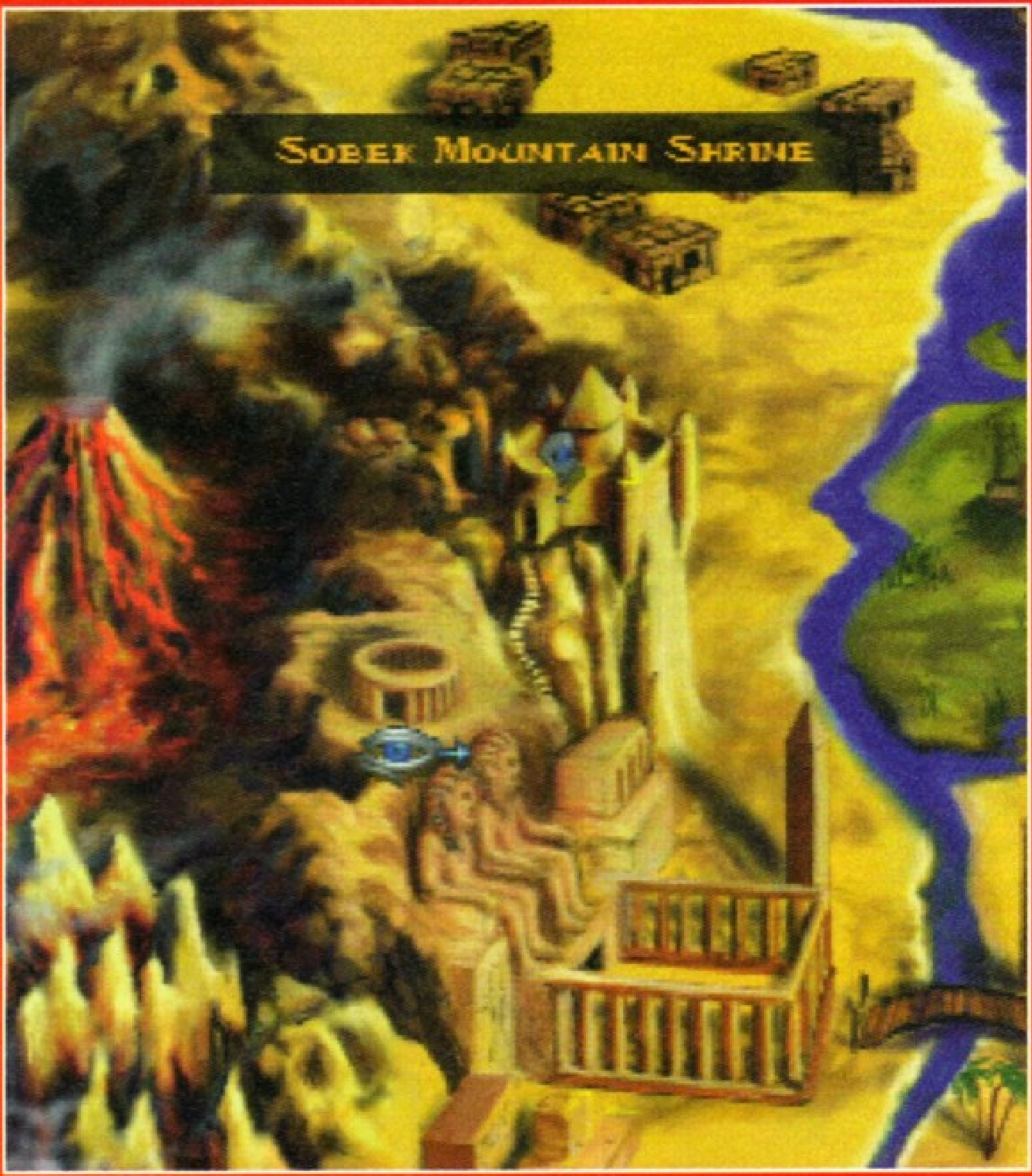


IT WEARS A SEE-THROUGH MAP!

There are lots of labyrinthian tunnels and passageways in Exhumed. So many in fact that you could easily get lost. Thankfully though the programmers haven't forgotten to include that trusty map so you don't have to go through the embarrassing process of asking the way off passing mutants. The map is actually laid transparently over the top of the playing screen so you can chart your progress as you go.









Looks pretty darn good eh? Well we'll be letting you know just how good it is in exclusive review next month. Be there, or be embalmed and wrapped in bandages for eternity!

THINGS HAVE BEEN PRETTY QUIET IN THE LAST YEAR FOR GAMES GIANT KONAMI. IN FACT, UNTIL RECENTLY, THEY HADN'T ANNOUNCED ANY PLANS FOR SATURN DEVELOPMENT AT ALL. BUT THEY HAVEN'T JUST BEEN KICKING BACK WATCHING THE FLOWERS GROW. NOPE, THEY'VE BEEN WORKING ON A WHOLE BUNCH OF TOP NEW SATURN TITLES. SAM HICKMAN TOOK A TRIP DOWN TO THEIR CHICAGO HEADQUARTERS FOR A SNEAK PREVIEW.

> "we don't want to release products that are inferior on one system and better on the other. We'd rather give the consumer something different if we can't come up with the goods. But we're working on the transparency effects [for the Saturn] right now and so far our Saturn programmer hasn't come across many difficulties – we'll find a way around it!"
>
> Producer and designer, Overkill



THAT GOTTA HURT!



Loads of gory effects...



...plenty of mindless violence...



...the odd bit of complete carnage...



...we like this one – a lot!



"We've looked into the violence of the game a lot and i think it's a very easy option to blame stuff like movies or games when someone goes out and commits a crime. i mean, someone goes out and kills someone after watching a Tarantino movie? that's ridiculous."

Producer and designer, Overkill



Arriving at Konami's Chicago headquarters was a first in many ways. It was the first time that any Saturn projects were revealed, the first time the programmers got to talk about their hard work and most importantly, it was the first time any journalists have ever been allowed in to their top secret R&D department. So it was a major scoop that the first people ever to get a peek behind their solid, secret-coded wooden door were UK journalists. In fact, the people on the other side of the door were even more amazed than we were – many a nervous face peeped out from behind development kits, anxious at the prospect of prying journalists quizzing them over every aspect of their job. And, despite being allowed in to the development areas,we were not allowed to take pictures, and we can't name any of the programmers either, such is the nature of some of their top secret projects. If we showed you pictures, we'd probably go missing in some kind of bizarre road accident, or Konami's heavy men would show up in dark glasses outside our front doors. So you'll just have to take our word for it that we went there.



Anyway, the primary reason four UK journalists were invited up to Konami was to take an in-depth look at their top new title, Overkill. Originally destined as a UK only project, it was soon realised that the title was also perfect for the Saturn market and as of now, work on a Saturn version has begun.





TAKE OVER THE WORLD!

Before we go into the finer points of Konami's Overkill, there's a quite an interesting history behind the making of some of Konami's newer titles. Traditionally known as a Japanese company producing Japanese style games, it wasn't until recently that Konami decided to take on American developers and let them loose on their own projects.



The decision to take on American based teams was taken by Mr Kozuki, Konami's president in Japan. It was decided that a more western approach to gaming was needed in order for Konami to reach all possible audiences, and Konami America was set up for this purpose ten years ago. However, it wasn't until last year that KCEC was set up – a development only division of Konami with specific goals to develop exciting new titles for consoles (now expanded to PC too). This is >>





There's hidden extras in all of the levels – most of them are contained within the walls. Search everywhere.



>> where the Overkill team were first brought together – after many rounds of rigorous interviews from the top people already there. Today, many people are employed in their top secret research department and the aim is to steadily expand the department until it eventually grows to 200 people – something they're expecting to achieve within the next two years.

GIBLETS ALL ROUND!

Overkill is KCEC'S first Saturn project and even in this early stage of development it's fair to say that it's going to be a huge hit with Saturn owners. Taking an isometric view, as opposed to the increasingly popular first person view, Overkill is a blood and guts shoot 'em up with giblet factor 10 (at least). It looks a bit like Loaded, although it has to be said that it's way, way more violent – quite an achievement when you consider the flame throwing, blood spurting antics seen in Gremlin's game . It's also way, way bigger than anything seen on Saturn before, with loads of levels to conquer – just one of those levels will keep you going for half an hour!

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS...

One of the most enjoyable parts of Overkill is that although at first it may seem as though the only way to get through the game is to mindlessly shoot everything, there's actually quite a strong strategy element involved in the proceedings. Although each character has an array of weapons to choose from and utilise, they do run out quite rapidly and once this happens, you're left to fight with a basic knife or even your bare hands. And, if you're faced with some of the larger monsters, you're going to find yourself in a very tricky situation indeed, with a particularly gory death imminent. So, it's best to save up your weapons for the later parts of the level ad use your hand weapon or fist to take out the weaker enemies at the beginning. Plus using your bare hands seems *so* much more brutal – the enemies will slump at first, then as you twist the knife in again, they'll fall to the floor in a pool of blood. or, if you're really lucky, their guts may spray out on to the wall. And as if all that isn't enough, you get the added satisfaction of paddling in their entrails and leaving your bloody footprints all around the level!

"With characters like Kreeg you find yourself laughing, but if you're laughing at the fact that you're on a computer console and you've just hit some poor guy in the face or there's this guy on the floor that's stunned and you go over and boom! that's what makes the game so funny especially when you look at some of the people that come in to play the game and when they see things like that happen. They think wow! and it makes them want to play the game more."

Producer and designer, Overkill



DIE, MUTANT EVIL!

There's an abundance of colourful enemies throughout the levels, spanning the weakest foot soldiers to huge droid/arachnid bosses that chase you at great speed. There's also huge beasts that beat you around the head with their bare hands, mire beasts that hurl acid balls and slagg creatures that slash with their poisonous claws. And your character doesn't simply recoil from an attack then carry on. Nope, every time he gets hit, he bleeds too!

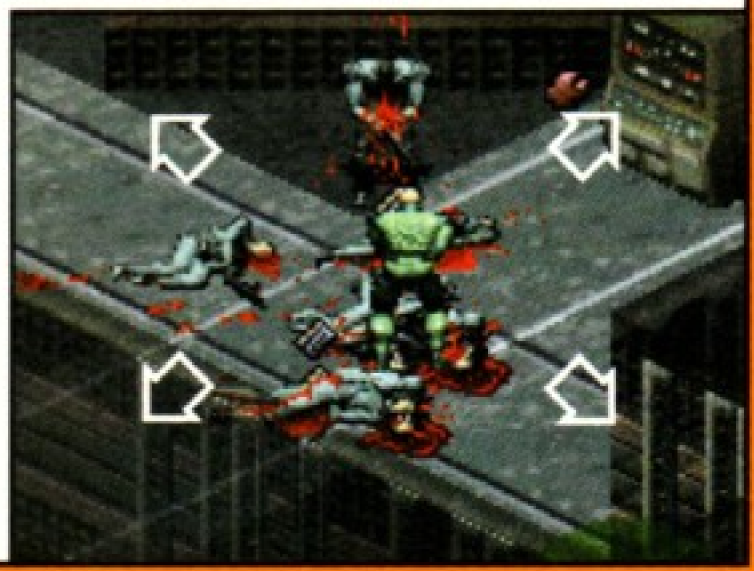


As you can tell from this screenshot, Overkill is quite a violent game.



A NEW CONTROL SYSTEM!

Overkill also has a unique control system. The directional pad is used as in any other game, to determine the character's direction , but the shooting buttons are also used in a directional way too. Four buttons are used to determine the weapon direction, and from the direction the character faces (each character can move around in any direction), he can spray the enemy at up to a 45 degree angle, making wastage of firepower much less likely, and a more precise game possible. It's similar to the Smash TV control system, if anyone remembers that.





All of the characters are sketched out before they're programmed into the game.



Some of them change in development, but others remain the same throughout.



These blue monsters are the colour versions of the sketch on the left.



Hurray! Dance in the entrails of the freshly killed enemies!





I CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH YOU!

One of the main features of the game involves transparency – something the developers admit is going to be a tough task on the Saturn, although the team think they're up to the job in hand. Hidden in the walls are a variety of weapons, that can only be seen if you walk right next to the wall – they then become transparent and the secret goodies will be revealed. It's practically impossible to complete the game without searching for the extra weapons, simply because so many of them are hidden in each room. The transparency works in other ways too – for instance it will reveal a part of the level that seems impossible to get to, but will become accessible later on in the game.

> **"We chose the isometric perspective because it meant you could see more of the playing area and also you could see an arrow go through the chest and you can see the result from behind too. it's nice to see the world from that kind of perspective, then you can see what kind of carnage you've created and it gives you an opportunity to paint the world with blood and bodies."**
>
> Producer and designer, Overkill

There's other hidden parts to the game too – sometimes you'll have to punch the wall out to get to them, or sometimes you'll have to flick a switch to deactivate a force field or open a screen. The good thing about this is that it all adds to the incredibly dark, tense atmosphere of the game.

COMING TO A SATURN NEAR YOU...SOON!

At the moment, work on the Saturn version of Overkill is in its very early stages, and although it's been decided that from now on, Playstation and Saturn projects will be developed simultaneously, at the moment the Playstation version is much more advanced. However the programmers are certain that they can replicate the same effects on the Saturn and that the version should be out within a couple of months of the Playstation release. We'll be updating you on its progress until then, but it's already obvious to us that this is going to do extremely well this Christmas!

WHAT'S YOUR POISON?

There's four playable characters in Overkill, and the way you use them is completely up to you. You can build up one character throughout the game, or you can use each character in turn, using their particular strength for a certain level. This effectively means that you have four lives, although there will be some form of save in the game – the programmers haven't decided whether it should be a password or automatic save yet.

Each of the four characters has very different abilities: There's Kreeg, an earthling armsman with enhanced aggression. He's a mercenary with little time for anything other than earning his crust. He is, make no mistake, extremely violent, and likes nothing better than to blow away anyone who's not on his side.

Then there's Quogg, a lumbering saurian with a pea for a brain, but who can perform incredible feats of strength. In fact, he prefers to kill with his bare claws rather than use a weapon.

Jendryk is an Hyrkanian assassin famous for his stealthy attacks on the enemy, in fact he's so cunning, half the time they won't even know he's there. The team is completed by Althea Timmeron, a transhuman with a penchant for anything that burns. Naturally, she's an expert in high explosives!



> **"if you don't have some of that [vio-lence]in there you have a very boring product. On the other hand you have to be very careful as games become more realistic and take more influence from movies, games become more graphic. But this product is designed for a mature audience and this should be taken into considera-tion when parents buy games for their kids"**
>
> Ted Markley, Vice President, KCEC



Blimey. There's nothing like doing a job properly, is there? Not a single one left.



If you get to those red bits in the game, it will transport you to another part of the level. Obviously, the aim of doing this is so that you can kill more things in a different room.





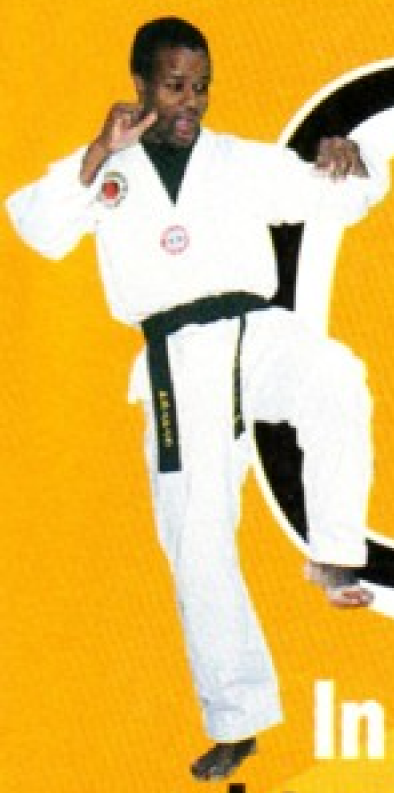
The map on the right displays the different strategies you can take to complete the game, and the different levels to tackle.







*Thanks to all of **KCEC**, the **Overkill development team** plus **Mitch Ueno**, **Ted Markley** and **Jon Sloan** for all their help.*



GO EAST!

In addition to ploughing ahead with their own releases, Konami have signed outside development companies to create games for them too! 47 TEK are the first to be signed, and SAM HICKMAN visited their headquarters for a look at their debut Saturn title, Kumite.

The first thing you'll notice about developers 47 TEK is that they're absolutely nuts about Martial Arts. In fact, it seems you can't work there without being involved in it one way or another – after all they do have a martial arts centre slap bang in the middle of their offices. And if you talk to anyone there about their favoured discipline, they'll go over all misty eyed or they'll start high-kicking all around the desks. Most of the people that work there are either experts in their chosen field, or have taken an art up, under the experienced eye of Derek Mitchell, third dan black belt in tae kwon do, chief game designer and Kumite's producer. So, it came as little surprise to me to hear that 47 TEK's debut Saturn title is a one on one fighting game encapsulating the feel of real martial arts. In fact, you won't find anything in the game which isn't a move from one of the martial arts. The title, Kumite, aims to replicate the feel of real martial arts and brings the world's greatest martial artists together in one tournament. The result of entering the competition could quite possibly be fatal.



Now remember kids - accept life as the willow tree accepts the wind. And this also - he who knows naught and knows he knows naught is the enlightened one.



47 TEK are also unique in that they're basically dedicated to producing 3D fighting games. And when they say 3D, they mean it – their aim is to view a game from any angle and to be able to play the game from any angle too. They're the only company we know of that have decided to pursue only one type of game, and this should stand them in good stead for future titles.

DISCOVER THE TRUE MASTER

At the moment, only two of the fighters have been programmed into Kumite, and development on those two characters is still in its early stages. However, what's already apparent is that the two contestants have very different fighting skills. Karambi, the defending champion, prefers the kung fu style Harimau Silat, while Navajo indian, Marshall, prefers Capoeira, a close quarters martial art. Both have entered the competition for very different reasons, but essentially, their aim is to win the tournament for the chance to fight and train with the ultimate martial artist, Master Lo. As with all the characters, Team 47 are aiming to program in real martial arts moves that are played in a spontaneous way – so you can change directions in the middle of movements, or string combos together then change them at the last minute – just like in real life. And as the game should be 3D, you'll be able to side-step or backwards dodge your opponent in 3D space, giving the game much more realism than in MK3 or Streetfighter Alpha.

As we mentioned, Kumite is still incredibly early in development, but with such a large team working on the project, it's likely that progress on the title will be storming ahead over the next couple of months. With any luck, we'll be bringing you an update on the game within the next couple of issues!







BEEN AROUND THE WORLD

47 TEK are quite odd as far as development companies go (and that's saying something considering the usual array of oddballs that tend to be employed in the computer game business). In addition to their martial arts obsessed San Francisco base, they work in conjunction with their Chinese counterparts, who are based in Taipei. The two companies work on one project at the same time, via the information superhighway. So, when one branch is finishing up for the day, the other is just starting – by putting the day's work on a huge network between the two companies, one team can begin where the other left off. This means that for Kumite there's around 60 people employed on the game and development is taking place 24 hours a day – so in all, there's much more development time crammed into one game than some other teams can manage.





Exclusive FIRST LOOK At Saturn Fighting Vipers!!

SNAKE EYES

Sometimes it's easy to forget just how many amazing Sega coin-ops are around at any one time. Their latest beat 'em up success is just around the corner for Saturn owners. We got these shots through just before going to press and just had to get them in the mag.



In the midst of the current frenzy surrounding the news of Virtua Fighter Kids and Sonic Fighter – both as coin-ops and the revelation both are on their way to the Saturn – it seems that we've forgotten that Fighting Vipers ever even existed. But it does, and it's absolutely great. We'd know as well, because we've played it loads in the arcade around the corner from work, and as a result we're know absolutely thrilled to see the latest pics of the 32-BIT home conversion of one of our favourite Sega title. We're not just saying that, either. We mean it from the bottom of our giant shared heart which we keep in a tank of formaldehyde. Well those little workaholic beavers over at Sega have been slaving over a hot computer for the best part of this year readying their Fighting Vipers console invasion.

If for one second you doubt our passionate affection for this game, may we beg you to peruse the shots spread across these pages. All of them come from the official Saturn work-in-progress version, which Sega have kindly allowed us to get a butcher's at, because they knew it would make us happy. In a similar frenzy of benevolence we're now letting you, our beloved readership, have a good gawp for much the same reason. Because we think it'll make you happy, and that's what's important.





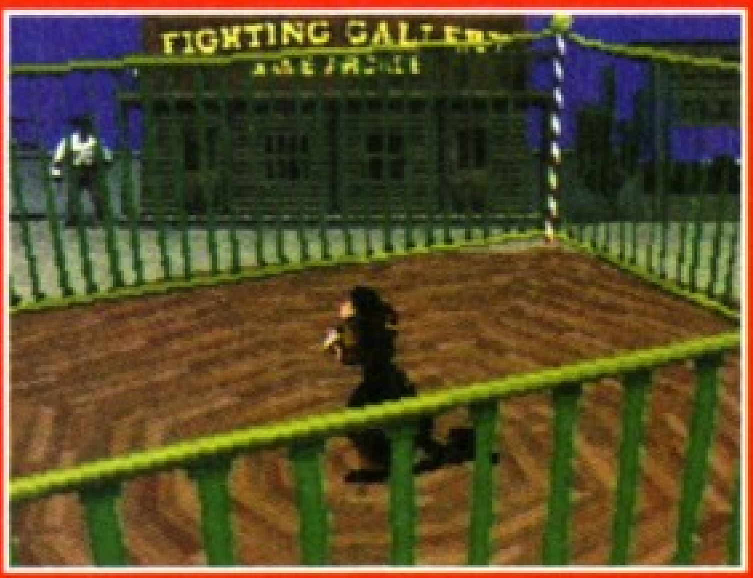


FIRST PLAYABLE VERSION UNVEILED!

The shots seen on these pages come from the very first playable demo of Fighting Vipers on Saturn. The conversion kicked off in the first quarter of this year, and Sega are still confident they can hit their target of a European release in October. The advanced version pictured is on display at this month's Tokyo Toy Show, and will be the Japanese press' first look at the game in the flesh. Copies of the demo should hit Sega in this country shortly afterwards. As always, there are rumours of plenty of Saturn-only options, although none are confirmed as yet, but Sega Europe are swearing blind that UK Fighting Vipers will run in full-screen mode and at full speed. And we believe them.









GET ON THE SNAKE

If you're not familiar with Fighting Vipers you obviously haven't been inside an arcade for some time. Made, like Last Bronx, as a kind of off-shoot from the Virtua Fighter series, Fighting Vipers features some outlandish and generally smart characters engaged in a spot of single combat. Picky is everyone's favourite – he's this little kid on a skateboard with some of the coolest moves seen in any beat 'em up. However, all the other participants are of roughly equal skill and power – although their fighting style and tactics vary wildly. It was originally thought Fighting Vipers was being developed as a kind of Junior Virtua Fighter for younger players, but this rumour was proved more than unfounded when players actually had a go and experienced the depth and frenzied pace of the final game. After the spectacular job Sega did on Virtua Fighter 2 we're especially looking forward to Fighting Vipers here at SSM.

DODGE VIPERS

Like every other game on the face of the planet these days, Fighting Vipers has a bit of a gimmicky twist to it to get players interested. However, unusual though this may sound, it's nothing daft or superficial. Each fighter in Vipers starts the bout fully swathed in armoured clothing. The efficiency of this armour varies from character to character, but all areas of all combatants start out protected. however, as each region takes more and more damage the armour wears down, until bit of it area eventually smashed right off the player's virtual body, leaving zones about your person more vulnerable to damage. Obviously, Saturn FV would look a bit silly without this element, so you should be glad to learn that it will appear in its entirety, although we're unsure as to whether discarded items of armour will remain cluttering up the floor of the combat arena. This graphical fol-de-rol may be sacrificed for faster processing speed.

That looks like Tom Cox, who worked here.



And that looks like Dick Turpin, who did too.



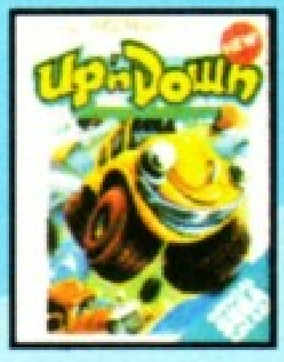
And that looks like our offices.

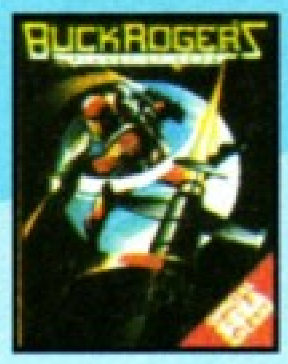


Blimey! It's the SSM fighting game! Sharoo!









To be *this* good takes AGES





Believe it or not, the ancient 8-BIT Master System wasn't Sega's first hardware leap into the front rooms of the world. Prevalent as they are in this climate of cutting-edge cyber-technology, Sega have been hanging around peoples' houses since 1982, when they pioneered the Turbo Drive Module. This sounds like some kind of NASA space engine, but was in fact a steering wheel concept peripheral for the CBS Colecovision console. It featured a wheel mounted on a "dashboard", along with a Colecovision hand controller to act as a gearstick and a cute little accelerator footpedal. One compatible game (Turbo Driver) was provided with the unit, and Coleco promised more to follow. They didn't.

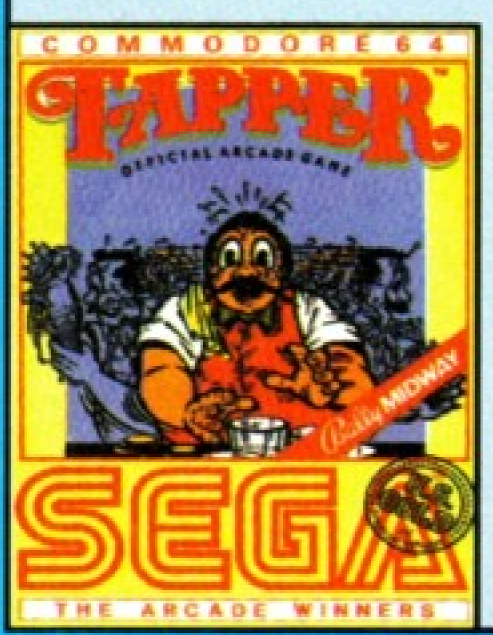


Having had their fingers (and possibly toes) burnt by the Turbo, Sega retreated to the more familiar territory of making games for the arcades and handling conversions of all their major titles to every console on the market at the time. And what consoles they were – behemoths such as the Atari VCS, and Intellivision, along with the new wave of home computers, machines with keyboards that wary parents preferred for their "educational" value, like anyone ever bothered programming them. It wasn't until '89 that Sega returned to the home fray, riding a wave of popular arcade games including Enduro Racer, and OutRun. But there's still a whole generation of 2-BIT Sega classics lying dormant, made back when computer games were still a new frontier, when any game that had more than one screen of action was an instant legend. Mankind had not seen their like before or (thankfully) since.



TAPPER

In the days before Mortal Kombat and Doom parents and censors were far more sensitive about the "family" nature of games. Tapper, an oft-forgotten slice of excellence, cast the player as a fat, sweaty moustachioed barman serving thirsty customers big foaming pints of... erm, soda pop. Hmm. Behind this thinly-veiled premise lay a frenetic race against time as Tapper ran to the soda fountains, filled up empty glasses and slid them along tables to the waiting (and impatient customers). Like most games of its age (1982) Tapper was simple in concept played on single static screen, but it was ace.







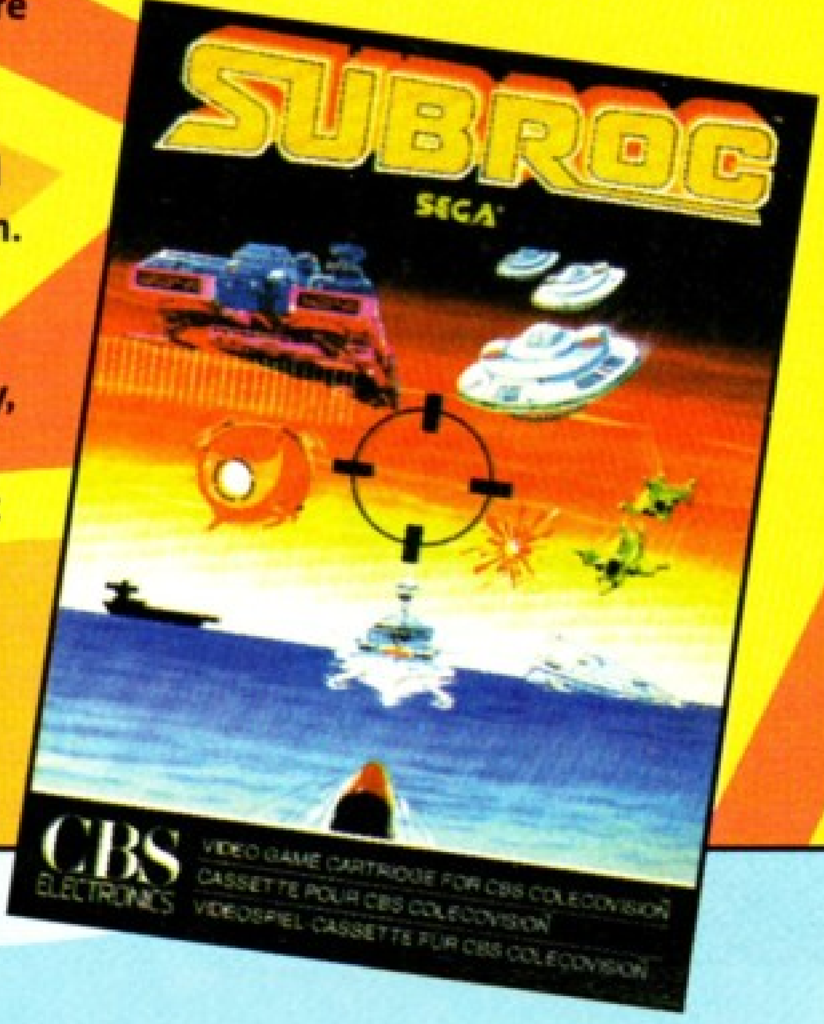
THE COLECO YEARS

Sega, premier arcade developers of the primitive games wilderness, made quite a decent impact on the Colecovision crowd. Most of their coin-ops found an eager home audience on the CBS machine, sold in cardboard boxes featuring the tag line "JUST LIKE THE REAL ARCADE GAME". Not too difficult in those days, admittedly. Although this epithet was bizarrely missing from the cover of one-submarine-against-an-alien-invasion cart Subroc. Perhaps that's because it wasn't just like the arcade game. In fact, it's simplistic aim-fire gunsight gameplay was pretty limited, even though the graphics weren't bad. However, games like Zaxxon, Space Fury and Carnival were ace. Carnival was one of the least right-on games ever, placing you in a fairground shooting at rabbits, ducks, owls and dancing bears. Carnival would never be launched these days, Space Fury was slightly more agreeable to the fur-sensitive players – it was a kind of Asteroids clone where players shot flying bits of machinery before they were able to join together into space ships and shoot you down. None of these titles may look like much today, and indeed they aren't, but back then they were the dog's knees.



Wow. They don't make them like this anymore. How terribly sad.









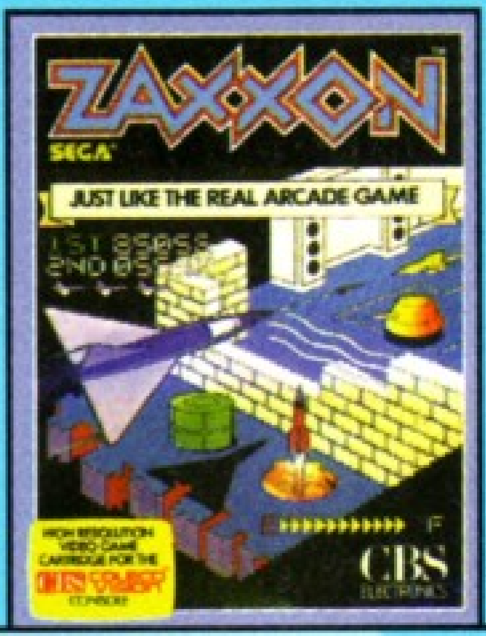


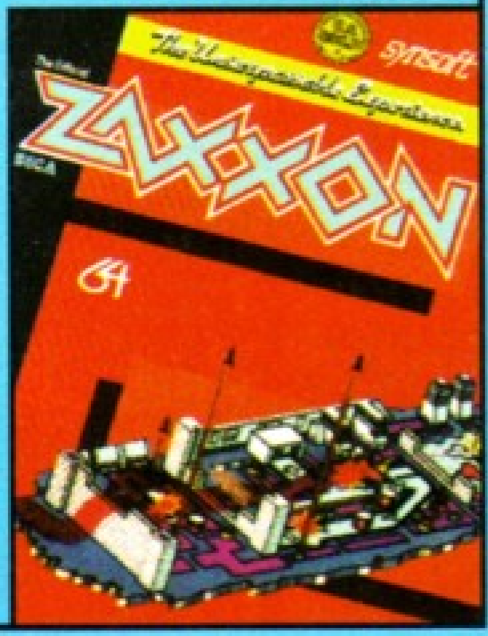
Grrrrrr. I'm from the follow-up, Super Zaxxon.

ZAXXON

Zaxxon is the stuff of which reputations are made. It was a breakthrough shoot 'em up played in 3D forced perspective – a totally new concept back then. The combination of screen depth and altitude control amazed players, and it quickly became one of the most popular arcade titles going. Zaxxon conversions reached just about every machine going, from the Atari to the Commodore 64, and the forthcoming Saturn title Viewpoint bears a startling resemblance, in essence if not in graphical quality. Luckily.



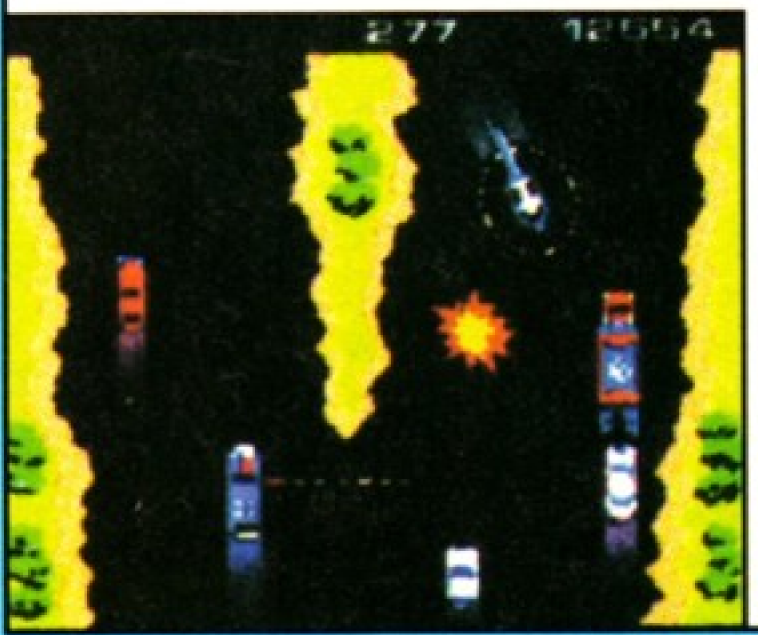




SPY HUNTER

Ask any sad old gamesplayer like ourselves what Sega's best game ever is and the answer will always be the same – Virtua Fighter 2. If you'd have asked us the same question ten years ago, however, we would have said "Why Spy Hunter of course – the amazing high-speed shoot 'em up where you control a transforming sports car/speed boat armed with missiles, machine guns, smoke screens and oil slicks, where you, the player, must blast through numerous mission laden with evil enemy cars, boats and helicopters – it's just the best game in the whole world". Which it was.

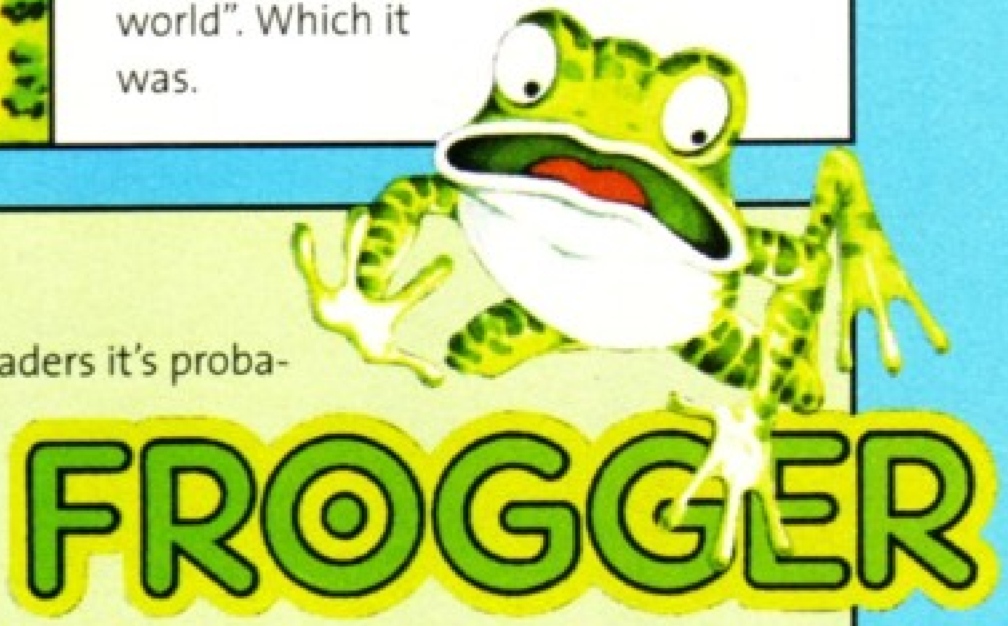




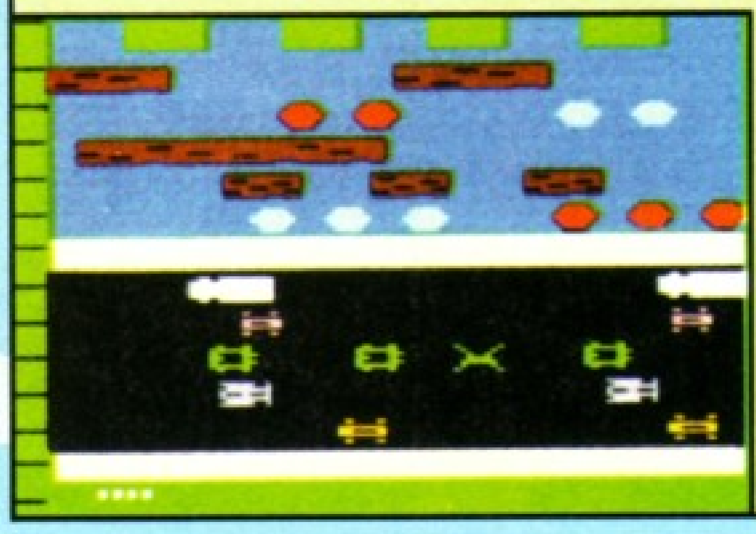
THE NAMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

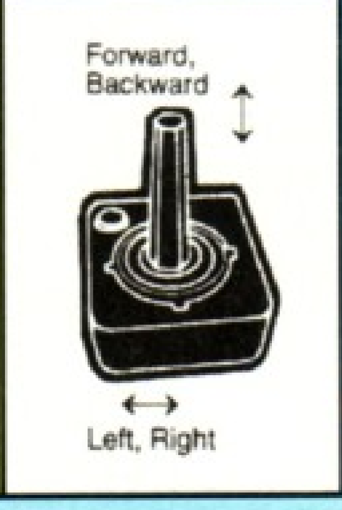
The Sega logo is one of the most familiar in gamingdom. But it wasn't always that way. Well, it sort of was, but it has changed over the years.It started out all skinny and Seventies looking, in the mid-Eighties it changed to the fatter block script we're used to today, but it wasn't until the end of the decade that they added the binding outline with surrounds the script now.

FROGGER

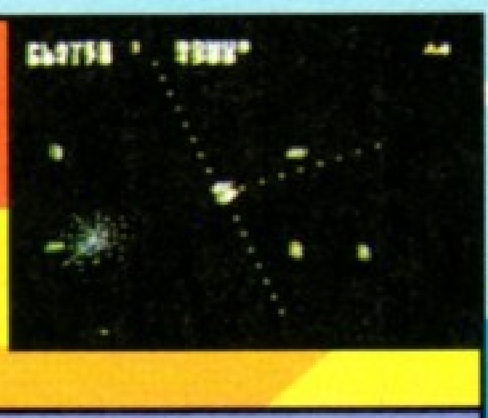


Everyone knows about Frogger, even your dad. Next to Space Invaders it's probably the most famous game in history. Guide your frogs back to their lily pads, avoiding cars and trucks on the road, drowning and crocodiles in the river and... nothing else. Alright, so it sounds rubbish now, but try playing it. It's dead hard, and thanks to the titchy time limit it's constant living-on-your-nerves experience. The graphics were so great the Atari instruction book had to describe what everything was, eg "The red circles that float on the river are turtles". The complexity level is demonstrated by the End of Game panel in the same leaflet: "The game ends when no frogs are left".

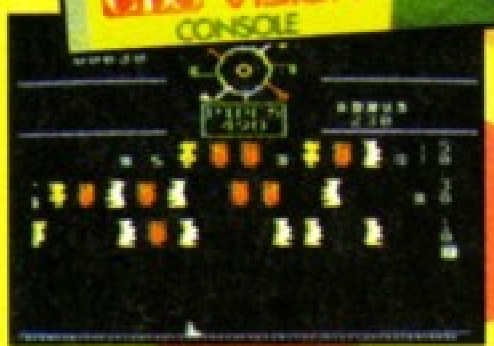












Kill as many poor endangered bears as possible in Carnival, but don't let PETA catch you.



RETRO CLASSICS

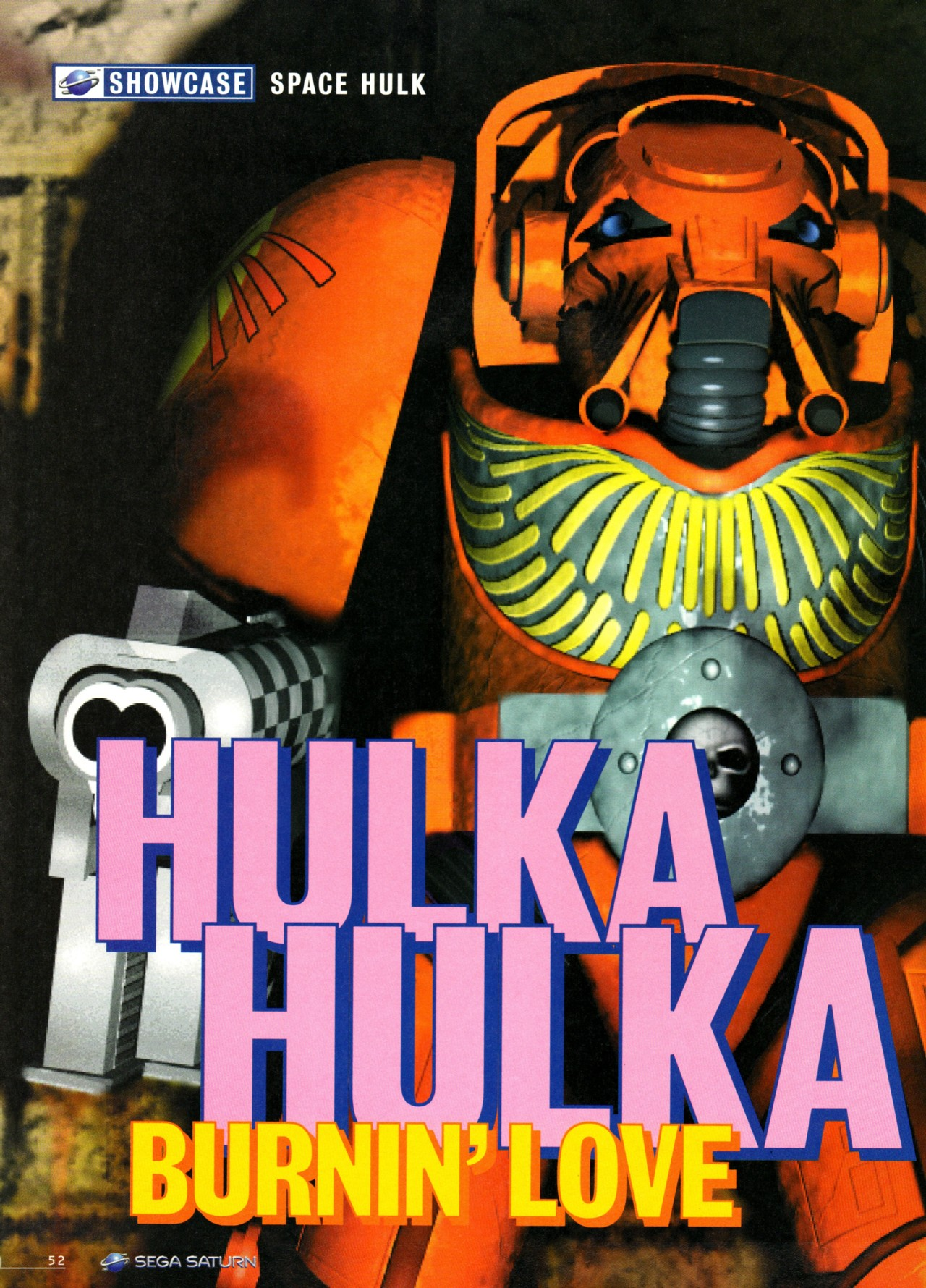


Judging by the letters we've received at SSM there are loads of people out thee gagging to get their hands on knocking-on-a-bit Sega arcade conversions. The three on their way to the Saturn right now are the famous Space Harrier, Afterburner and OutRun. In their day these were meisterworks. For starters, they all had novelty moving cabinets – people would travel literally hundreds of yards to seek out the full monty hydraulic Ferrari replica OutRun sit-in cabinet, let alone the turn-you-upside-down Afterburner machine. Sadly these add-ons are unavailable for the Saturn as yet, but the playability remains awesome. Yeah yeah, you may scoff, but without Harrier there'd be no Panzer Dragoon, and Sega Rally doesn't even have as many courses as the fabulous OutRun (which also allows you to choose your route through the game at each checkpoint).





Most of the games in this feature were from out of Dave Kelsall's own collection but the rest were supplied by M.Yates who runs a mail order service for old games (0181 556 3860) and Jason Moore who produces a fanzine called RETROGAMES (0181 203 8868).



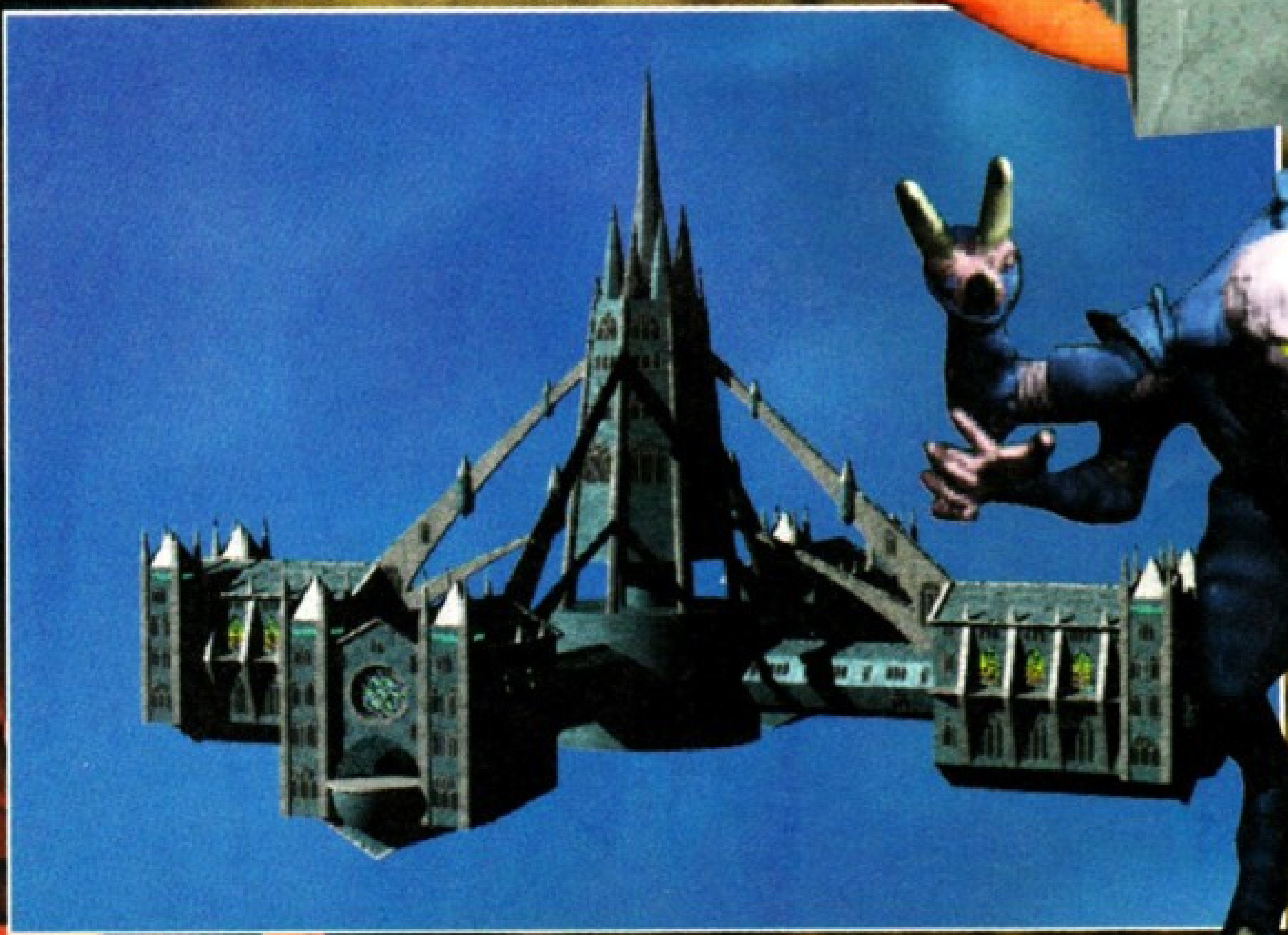
HULKA HULKA BURNIN' LOVE

SPACE HULK

Only one thing beats a bit of alien blasting, and that's loads more alien blasting. Space Hulk has got alien blasting coming out of its armoured little ears, and it wants THEE to experience the full delights. Come fly with us into space as RAD proffers the low-down on the GORE MARATHON...

Hi readers, Trevor Arkhamasylum here, but you can call me "Dick". Everyone else does. The kind SSM staff have asked me in to explain the fascinating hobby of "role-playing games". Now you may scoff about RPGs (as we like to call them) being for lonely saddoes– but you need other people to play them with. Not like your computer games, where you just sit in your bedroom on your own playing against no-one and writing down your highscores in little books and giving your consoles little pet names like "Bunnykins". Ha. No, you need friends to play RPGs, you can't play them by yourself. Unless you take both sides in wargame ones, but that's not sad because the luck of the dice means you can never predict the outcome of your own strategies, actually. Not that I'd know of course. I've got lots of friends. Anyway, the reason I'm here is to explain the rudiments of Games Workshops' Space Hulk, so you can better understand the new computer game based around its "mythos". They had to make it into a computer game, because you lot probably can't understand proper rules like RPGs have got. In fact, you probably can't even read this. Ah ha ah ha. So without further ado, and speaking slowly and loudly so you can understand me, on with the lesson.

>>





>> Space Hulk is set in the year 20304698, when man has made his glorious conquest of the stars. Now the Earth is ruled by seventeen "houses" of power, each of which is divided into twenty-two "reichs", each of which governs forty-one "member states". Each of these member states employs armies of Imperial Marines (there's only one Emperor, though – he's Claudius Nero Prostate III, the Mad Monk of Lucretia, he's only got one eye and he went mad after witnessing a dog being born when he was three. He rules the galaxy with a dread fist), and all the Marine armies have different names. My favourite is the Gristle Angels, because they've got nice white uniforms, with black, red and yellow trim. Their commander is Savlon IIX.

Anyway, as well as all the Imperial forces there's this rebel army called the Scabies Troop who are commanded by David Hasselhoff IIXXXXX. They're not in the game, but you need to understand the political intricacies of their Angling Rights Treason to know what's going on... waffle waffle blah [Edited by SSM for reasons of sanity preservation]

And then there's these aliens called Genestealers, and they're trying to destroy humanity. There's this big space ship full of them hurtling towards your home planet of Devlar III. You and your Marine buddies have to run around the giant Leviathan Class space cruiser and kill them all before they land and devour everyone. I know that might sound a bit complex, but you could at least try to understand.



This here is one of them thar Genestealers in an earth-shattering close-up. too. He's obviously in pain. Or perhaps it's a she. Anyway, your job is to kill all of these blighters. So step to it, you 'orrible little man.





HI SIR, WE'RE YOUR PALS!

You are not alone. Michael Jackson said that in a song, and some aliens said something like that in Close Encounters of the Third Kind. Now we're saying it about Space Hulk which, despite the lack of a two-player option, still provides company for your Marine Commander. A squad of Terminator Marines accompany you on each mission, but whilst they're extremely rock hard they're also a bit thick. Which is why they need YOU to tell them what to do. Learning to position and instruct your troops correctly is the first rule for success in Space Hulk, which relies as much on strategy as blasting. Almost. There's still loads of blasting, but you have to know how to minimise the odds against you by properly deploying your forces. This is probably the trickiest bit of the game to get into, but it's one of the most rewarding when you know what you're doing.



These are friendly Terminator Marines. And don't they look absolutely gorgeous? If you saw them down the youth club you'd certainly buy them a couple of drinks. Or they'd shoot you.

I WANT TO DRINK YOUR GENES!

You might think "We're all the same under the skin, how come we can't just sit down with the Genestealers, have a couple of drinks and sort this out without recourse to shotguns and chainsaws?". Well there's a traditional Genestealer ballad which explains it all quite succinctly, as we shall demonstrate.

"Oh alien, alien, won't you marry me with your mandibles, claws and drum?

Oh no sweet maid, I cannot marry thee, for I have no genes of my own. So I must wander the galaxies marauding and slaughtering in order to gestalt myself with fearful otherworlders. Thus I shall become a terrifying and grotesque assumation of both our forms. Grrr.

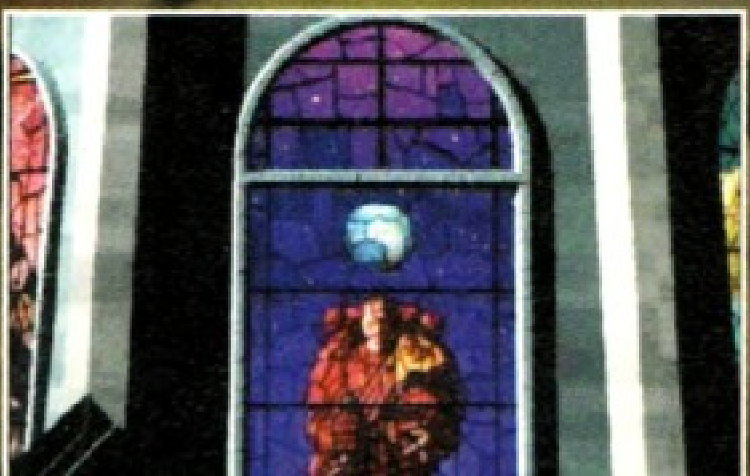
So off she went to her grandfather's chest and brought him some genes of the very very best etc etc."

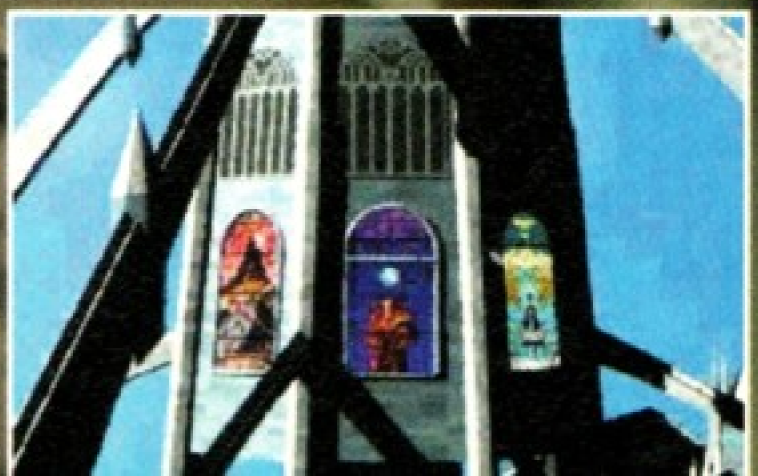
You see, these Genestealers are vile and evil and kill for fun and profit. The only way you'll settle this like gentlemen is by settling it like aggressive gentlemen armed with big laser cannons and sharp pincers. So, to aid you in your quest to kill, here's a little rundown of what you can expect from your enemies.

GENESTEALERS: These are the full-on, unreconstructed alien menace from hell. They've got four arms, two of which are like forearms. All their arms are armed with sharp head-gouging claws, tiny versions of which are replicated in their heads and are known as "teeth".They are fast, ugly and very hard to kill.

GENESTEALER HYBRIDS: These are Genestealers that have stolen some genes. The particular ones you find in Space Hulk have nicked human DNA, so look slightly more approachable. But still purple, and loaded with claws. These ones aren't quite so ferocious and angry, but they are smarter and may even outwit you.

BLOKES: These blokes are Marines who have turned to the evil Chaos (a bit like the Dark Side of the Force) and are under the command of David Hasselhoff IIXXXXX. You can tell they're not your own troops because they're not wearing their full armour. They must be killed.

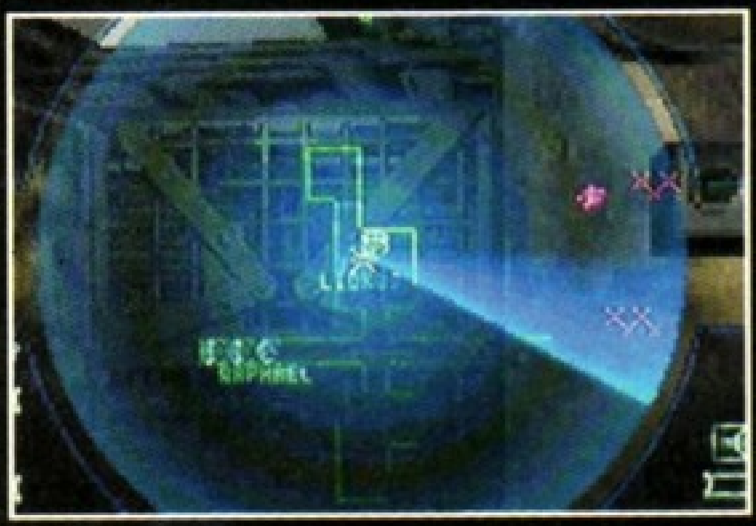




YOU'LL NEVER LEARN

Someone once said that experience is the best teacher. Most likely several smart-arses have since used this as an excuse when caught skipping Chemistry lessons to ferment potent homebrew. Well Imperial Marines know the true wisdom of this epithet. As they fight they learn more about both scrapping and their opponents' abilities. This generates Experience Points – like in a proper RPG but without all the paperwork. As you Marines earn more experience they get better in combat, especially in close-up hand-to-claw situations. Which means there's nothing to be gained from hanging around the back the whole time, you coward.

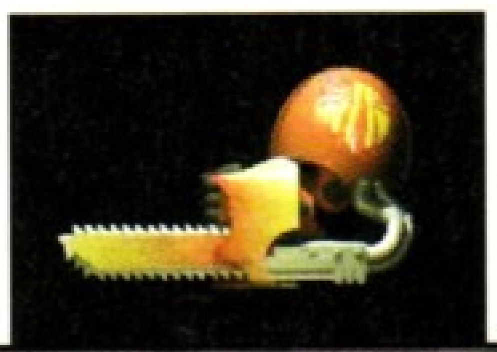


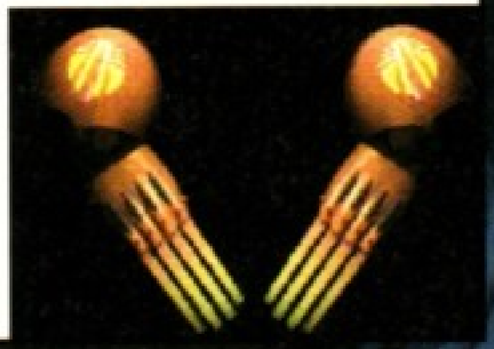


INSTANT DESTROYER AND KILLER

One of the reasons Space Hulk is so popular with the anaemic mole-like people who seem to play "combat strategy" RPGs is that it has a huge arsenal. That's not like a big football team towering monolithically over the world, it means loads of different guns. Which should also endear it to bloodthirsty video gamers too. Before each mission you're able to tool up from a selection of heavy duty arms, from Bolt Throwers (machine gun things) through flame throwers to chainsaws, each of which has its own advantages and ammo requirements. There's strategy inherent in this too, as chainsaws are useless at long range, and a grenade launcher is no good when a Genestealer is chewing on your nose.







I SHALL CURE THEE

The good thing about the future is that technology can do everything. Now if you're one of those Luddite types afraid of electric lighting then this might sound like a recipe for total redundancy of the human race leading to our extinction. But those kooky Imperial Marines would disagree, because that same technology happens to be saving their hides. Not only does their ultra-thick cybernetic armour protect them from lots of damage, it also reverses the effects of devastating attacks, given enough time. There's an Auto Repair function built into each suit which activates whenever the unit is not under attack, slowly healing the wearer and the outfit itself. So try to find a quiet spot after a firefight and lick your wounds. Not literally, of course, or you'll get a horrible metal taste in your mouth.







FREEZE, GODDAMN SUCKER

When Alexei Pajitnov first developed Tetris and went off for a cup of tea, he noticed something – he could just look at his paused game and work out where to place the next shape without worrying about time. "Right," he thought "I'll sort that out", so he made the screen go blank when the game's paused to stop himself cheating. Space Hulk, having a strategy element, time limit and extreme combat situations, does something similar. However, just to be fair on slow-witted gamers such as the SSM team, there is a function known as Freeze Time. This allows you to halt the game for a bit of a think without losing your knowledge of what's actually happening. Sadly you're only granted a limited quantity of Freeze Time per game, so use it wisely. Not when you're going to the loo.



CLASSIC BATTLE MODE TOO!

Wars are notoriously tricky things. You'd reckon there wouldn't be that much to it – leap in, shoot a few people, plant some flags and bosh! Bacon and eggs for breakfast. Well that's where you're wrong, it's a long, protracted and messy business is war. Space Hulk, being based around a war against aliens, upholds this tradition by having gallons of gore and millions of missions. Actually, not millions, we just said that because it's alliterative and sounds nice. But there are loads. You start the game in the Training missions, which are fairly easy and just allow you to get used to the controls and the whole rigmarole of positioning your troops and so on. Then comes the Campaign itself, where you and your squad tackle the real threat, and there's certainly nothing easy in that. If you're really really hot you can graduate to the Famous Missions missions, classic scenarios from the Space Hulk RPG which are notoriously rock hard. You wouldn't believe how much work this game takes to complete.

SPACE HULK WILL BE REVIEWED IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

NiGHT on Earth





NiGHTS is the game of everyone's dreams in more ways than one. Once again SATURN MAGAZINE scoops the latest news on its development...







(LEFT) NiGHTS in his toboggan form, ready for a quick bomb down the bonus-packed icy slege run of his lovely game.

Blimey three months ago we didn't even know about the existence of NiGHTS and now here we are with our third Showcase on the merry little blighter and his spectacular looking game. Excitement about NiGHTS is building to fever pitch amongst Sega players across the globe, and quite rightly, because it's sure to be a stunner. In true SSM tradition we've got hold of tonnes more pictures, along with more information wrenched straight from the clenched mouth of Sega of Japan. The rapid speed of progress reported last month has been maintained, and the team are confidently expecting to meet their originally stated launch date.Thanks to the Herculean endeavours of the programmers there's plenty new to see this month, from new character abilities to fresh levels. So stop reading this bit and have a look at the pictures. >>





All this talk of adventures in dreamyland makes me want to go to sleep and experience it all for myself.



NiGHTS is a lucky fellow, spending all of his days existing only in a state of sleep. Wish I could do that.





I wish I could do that too – I like backflips.

KNOW THE DRILL

In the earlier versions of NiGHTS we saw the juvenile protagonists were ill equipped to deal with the Nightmarean hazards awaiting them. That's partially because the Nightmarean hazards were awaiting a long way away having not been invented yet, and also because the authors hadn't programmed their full capabilities. Well we're not sure if Claris and Elliot are quite finished, but they do now have an attack. It's tentatively titled the Drill Dash, and it's fairly easy to guess how it works. Push the right button and your bloke (or blokess) performs a turbo pirouette, speeding forward into foes and bashing them out of your dreams.NiGHTS has picked up a new skill too. He can now destroy enemies more quickly by grabbing onto them and looping around, using his opponent as a lever. This saves performing a whole big Paraloop (the new official name for the fly-in-a-circle-and-open-up-a-vortex attack detailed in issue 7).



All-new giant Claris leaps for the red Idea, which attentive NiGHTS proto-fans will know signifies courage. And we can always use a bit of that right chums!



LAST TRAIN TO TRANSLUCENT

All those doubters who said that the Saturn can't handle proper translucencies can just go and bally well eat their hats, because NiGHTS shows that this lovely effect is fully within the reach of the Sega machine. Don't believe us? Well check out the shafts of sunlight leaking through the trees in these shots. Does that look all pixelly and blocky to you? No it doesn't. And anyone who says different is a liar. Of course, this isn't the only innovative graphical effect visible in NiGHTS, but it's certainly one Saturn owners will be pleased to see at last.




(ABOVE) Elliot tangles with the local architecture, obviously in an attempt to find extra Idea-earning bonuses.
(ABOVE LEFT) NiGHTS, himself on a bit of a bonus trail, attempts an assault course designed to test the player's flying prowess. A bit like a driving test.











If NiGHTS doesn't pull out of that dive he'll hurt his nose on the floor. If he had a nose. Which he hasn't.




(BELOW) NiGHTS encounters a friendly Nightopian native in his latest dream. The evolution of these indigenous peoples of the sleep world is partially under the control of the player, although we're not sure how yet.




UP THE WOODEN HILL TO SLEDFORDSHIRE

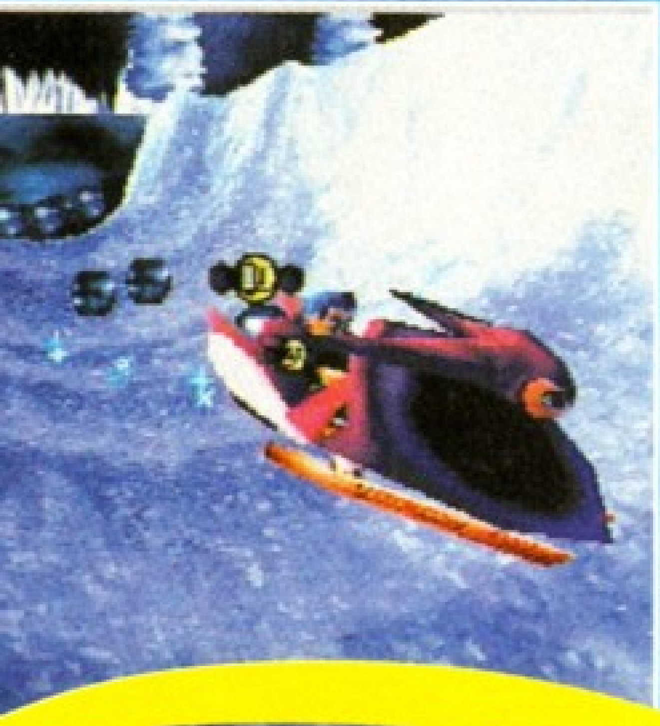
One element of the game we sadly don't have any shots of is the Bobsled Bonus. This sub-game comes into effect at the end of Elliot's Frozen Bell level (detailed elsewhere) and possibly in other unknown parts of NiGHTS. The viewpoint slides behind NiGHTS himself, who lies face down on an icy slope and bombs it down at high speed, collecting bonuses on his way. We'll have more Bobsled information and pics (hopefully) next month.

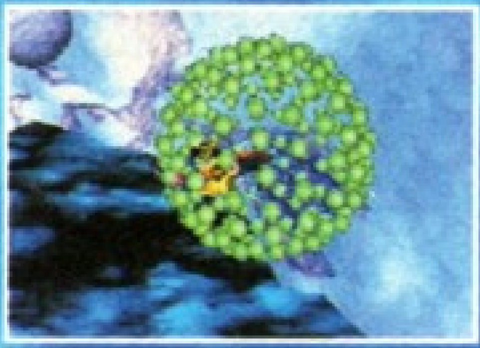


TURNAROUND... NAAAH

The kids have obviously been working out, because they've become far more agile since we last met them. Along with their new-found attacking capabilities they've also found a way of changing direction more effectively, although only when in NiGHTS form. As NiGHTS dashes past a large object, such as a tree, a touch of a button has them reach out their arm, grab the item and twist around it without losing speed.





















NiGHTS flying around the Frozen Bell, and it looks like he's just built a pretty snowman. Isn't that sweet. I'm looking forward to Christmas. Hope I get lots of presents.

(ABOVE) Well that doesn't look like a very warm place, I have to say.
(BELOW) NiGHTS swoops right in to the camera in a vision of extreme close-upitude, without pixellating or anything. He's a friendly sort. He just wants to say hello.

JUST LOOK AROUND

We thought we'd seen the extent of NiGHTS' camera-play by last month, but it transpires we were mistaken – NiGHTS is set to have more viewpoints than Anne Robinson's postbag. It's now known that certain sections of certain levels use a top-down view, and the close-up facility has been expanded (or narrowed, technically) to zoom right in on the action. You can even watch things from right in front of your character's face, as shown by these detail-rich pictures. It's absolutely awesome.







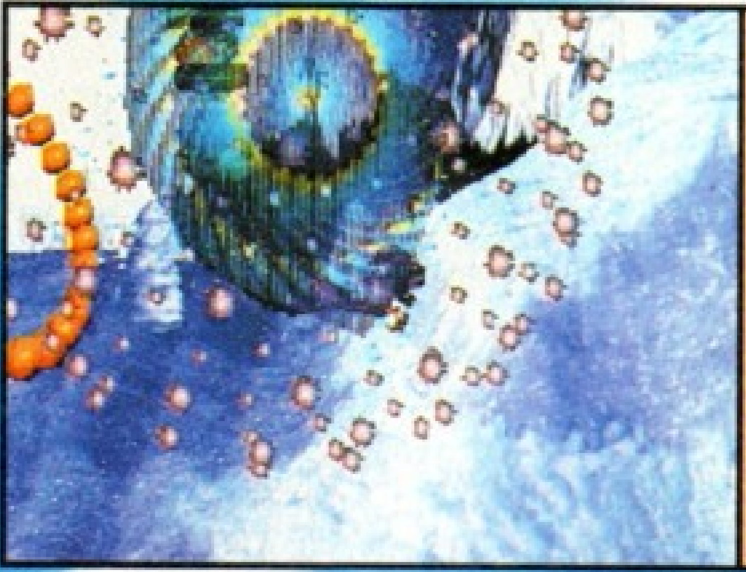




SPRING VALLEY: The Ideal

They say: The world of hills, with greens and waters. It is a beautiful world, shaped from the image of Claris' ideal, her father. There are lots of brooks and waterfalls from the melting snow. There are also steep, rocky slopes, giving added beauty of the nature. Fell the wind that breezes through the mountains, and learn the flights of the NiGHTS.
We say: *This is a Claris level we've already seen, and very nice it looks too. Very pretty indeed.*




FROZEN BELL: The Consciousness

They say: The world of hills, covered with snow. It is the world shaped from Elliot's consciousness deep inside. Climb up and slide down the steep slopes of the snow-covered mountain. There is a bobsled at the end for you to slide down.
We say: *This level will be familiar to anyone who's read our previous NiGHTS Showcases, but new features – such as igloos and snow balls – are now in place.*

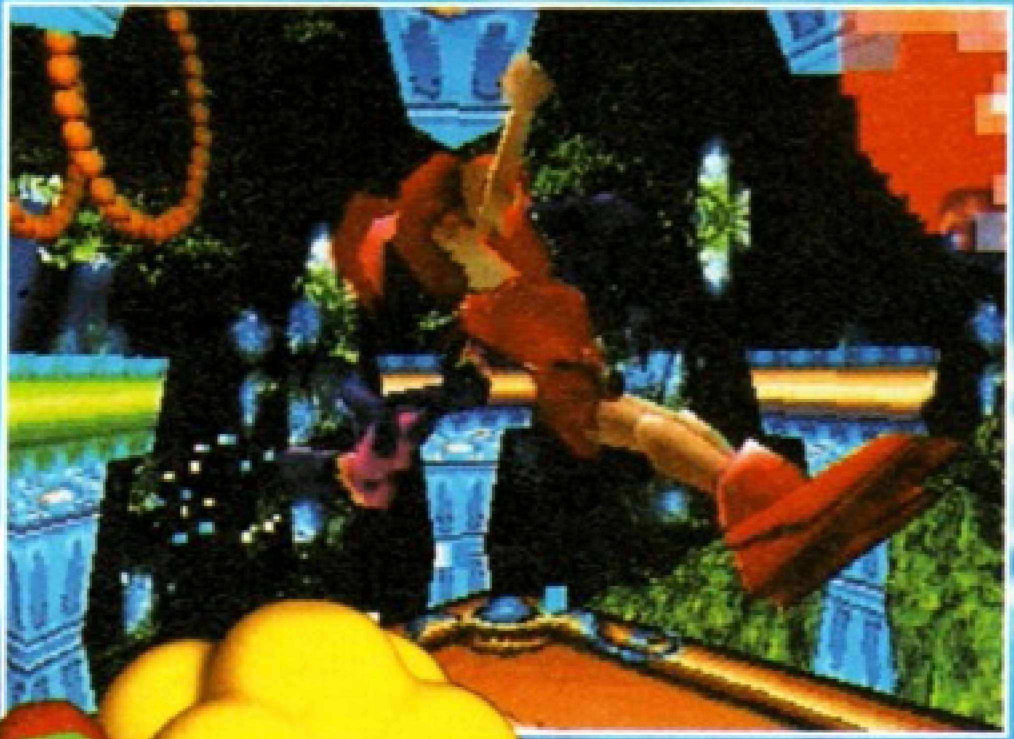
MYSTIC FOREST: The Possibility

They say: A world, created from the fusion of quiet forest with street signs, covered in dense mist. It is a world that is created by Claris' subconscious to her spirit of inquiry. It has many locations with mystic sensation, such as Ruins deep in the forest, mist that occasionally covers the space, and swamp that will pull anyone that gets lost. They say that there is a beautiful cavern deep underground...
We say: *This level features the terrifically-named Forest of Maze (sure to change) and the Swamp of Temptation. It also contain the first top-down section, gorgeously translucent mist and lots of secret switches and hidden bits.*




The closer we get to the launch of NiGHTS the more of this superb artwork we get to see. This picture is quite scary. I hope Claris doesn't fall.






NEW PAD SHOCK!

This is Sega's new NiGHTS pad. It's got a weird second D-pad above the regular one. Players flick between them with the switch at the bottom, to control NiGHTS and the kids better. More on this next month, dudes.







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Review Index

Call forth the lightning axe! Let us gather in vast stadiums about the world! Let our fists stridently punch the air in unison! For we are one and this is Rock!

Arrgghh!! Someone turn that Loaded music down! It's messing with my head. And so are all those splattered bodies and guns and strange cross-dressing maniacs. Oh well, that's modern life I suppose, and the main review as a matter of fact. As for the rest of the reviews, it's a bit of a mixed bag. In fact, you can see for yourself over the next twenty pages. Enjoy!























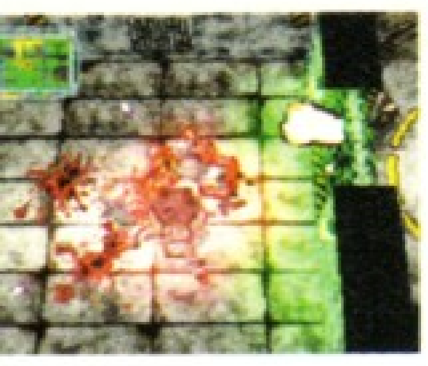


BY	GREMLIN
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	MASS DESTRUCTION
RELEASE	JULY

Life in the Big House isn't all **Ronnie Barker** and **grouting a snouty**, that's for sure. See what really happens on the inside (in an alternative future) with Gremlin's **Jailbreak Rock...**



It's a really good job The Sun hasn't noticed that Loaded exists yet, because otherwise there'd be trouble. The premise itself is a bit of a give-away as to the content of the game – take control of a heavily armed psychopath and have them blast their way out of a high-security prison, killing everyone from the guards to equally disturbed incarcerees in their padded cells. Explosions and blood ensue. Of course, us gamesplayers know there's nothing wrong with a bit of violent brutality – it's stress relieving, it gives you an insight into psychopathy etc – but Loaded is actually the most existentially rewarding title so far. As each of your foes is destroyed, their bloody remains are left plastered to the floor. Once you've killed just about everything in a level and are wandering around looking for the exit you're confronted with the shocking results of your actions. The sensation of guilt provoked by gazing at the charred corpses of innocents dead by your own hands has profound redemptive qualities, surely meaning no player of Loaded would ever commit an atrocious crime ever. And anyway, you're supposed to be over 18 to play it.





As you might have surmised by this point, Loaded is an action game. It's a sort of cross between Doom and ancient Atari coin-op Gauntlet. The proceedings are viewed from an isometric/nearly top down perspective, and your job is simply to guide your chosen protagonist through the various maze-like levels of chokey, blasting everyone to bits and searching for the exit. A confrontation with the gargantuan prison overlord awaits at the end and signifies the termination of your porridge. And that's it.

So you'd think Loaded is just a simplistic blast-a-rama with none of the subtlety demanded by today's gamers, and you'd be half right. There really isn't much to feed your brain in Loaded, but there's plenty of killing and mayhem, and your reactions are in for a sore testing at the multitudinous hands of the prison inmates, wardens, laser outposts, bosses and other terrors. Your eyes are also in for a sore testing thanks to the "atmospheric" use of lighting which plunges most of the game into near-total darkness only illuminated by muzzle flashes and explosions.

There aren't many games on the Saturn which have this much emphasis on straight-ahead killing without the added frippery of all-new Next Generation effects. Sure, Loaded has its fair share of 32-BIT beads and trinkets, but at its heart it's a non-stop kill-for-thrills blaster, and a pretty flipping good one, at that.



However, I can't give Loaded a blanket recommendation for every player. Obviously Loaded will find its fans, mostly among the hardcore shoot 'em up enthusiasts more concerned with body count than gameplay progression. For whilst Loaded is well programmed, has good controls, an intelligent selection of characters and a solid difficulty level, one level is pretty much the same as another. Sure, it gets harder as you go along and more vicious enemy elements are introduced, but the mazes remain fairly consistent throughout. This may disappoint those looking for a more imaginative and involving game. If you're in the market for an adrenalin-consuming high-mortality bullethon, though, Loaded should quench your blood lust.

RAD



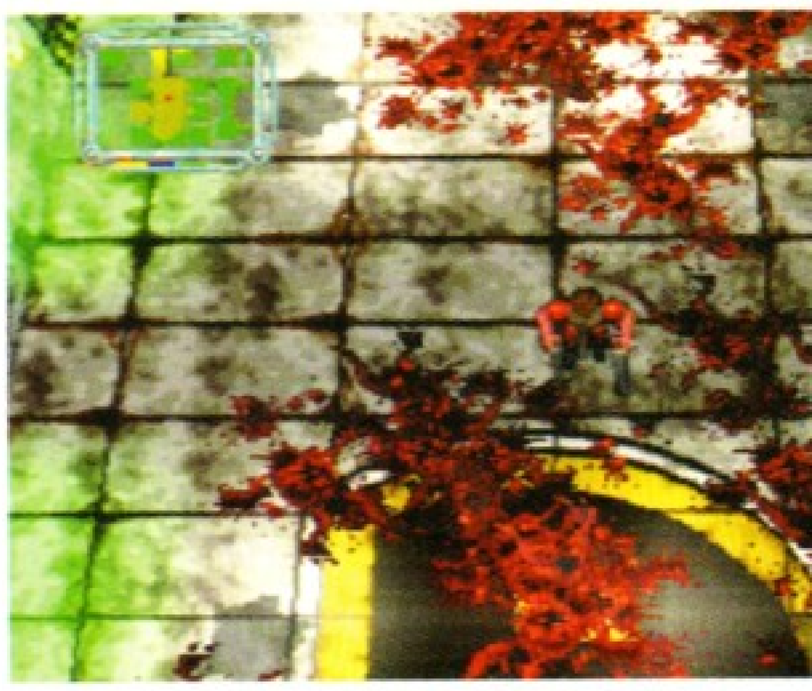






There's no way to get through heavy doors without a pass. Not even with big missiles.

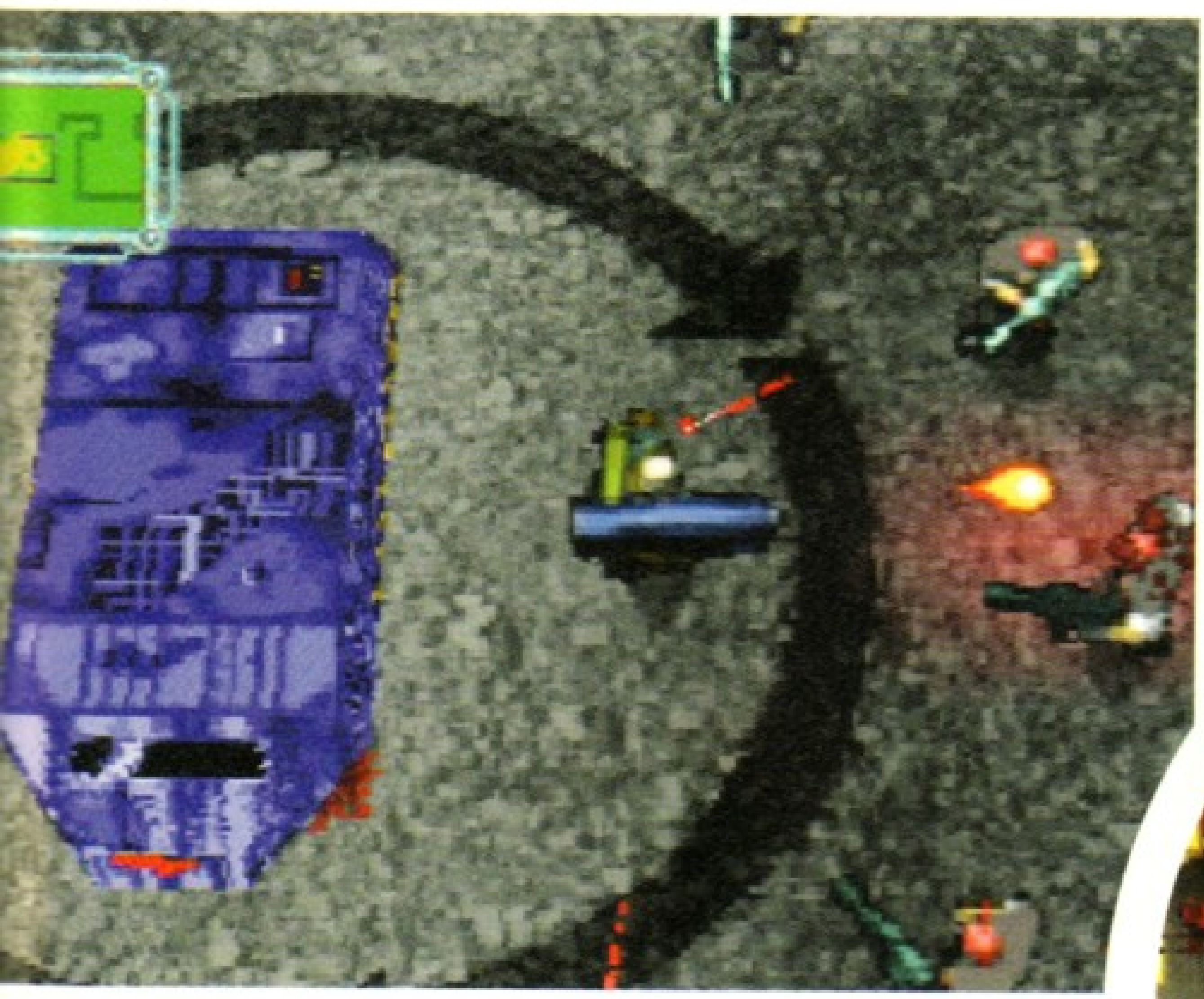




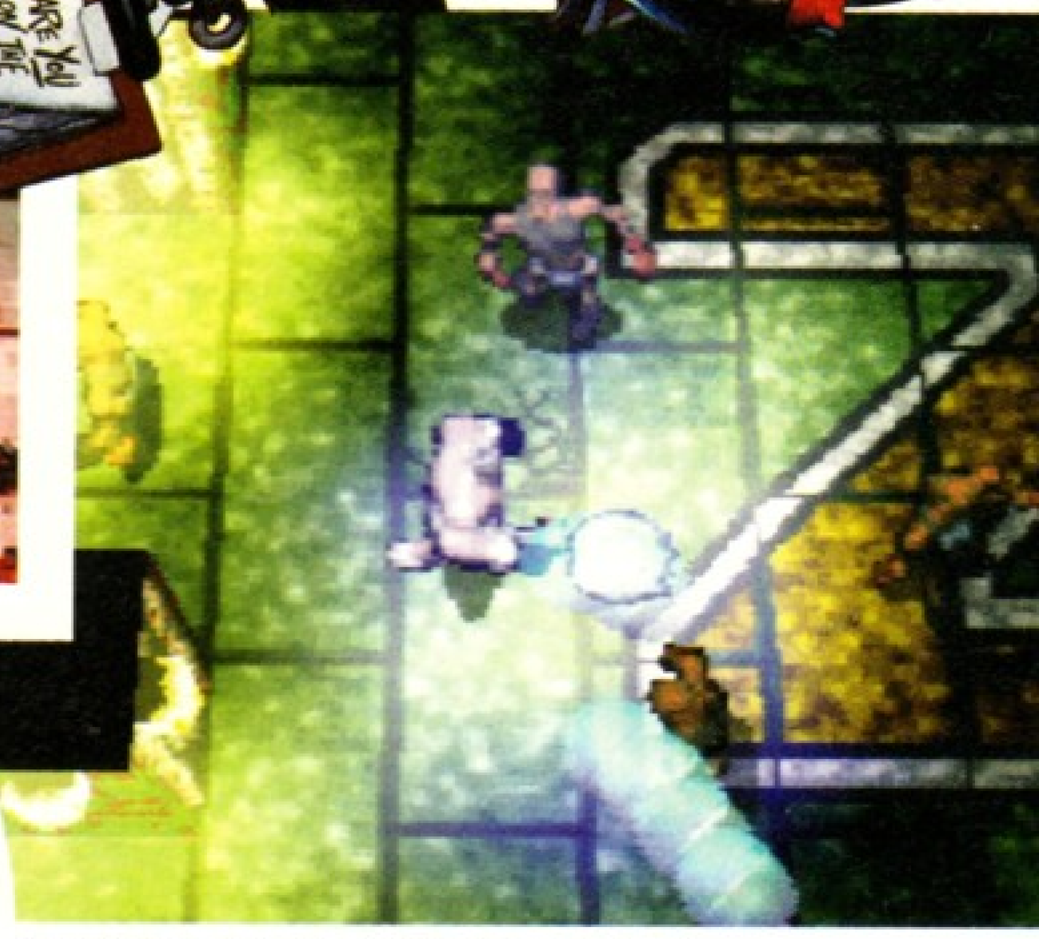
Cap'n Hands surveys the carnage he has wreaked upon countless innocent guards, and ponders the futility of such slaughter.

LOADED











(LEFT) Oh no, there's nothing violent about Loaded. Nope. Er, he's just had an accident with the ketchup. That's all. Nothing gory.



A number of zombie sewer dwellers having a go because they think they're hard enough.







EVERYONE MUST BE KILLED

Aside from the power needed to move those hundreds of sprites around at the same time, you might not think that there's anything that home-writing-worthy in Loaded. However, in addition to their normal weapons, each Loaded type has a super special weapon up their sleeves too. The primary purpose of these is to destroy just about everything in a large area, but there is a sinister nefarious subtext too – to show off. The graphical effects used in these hyper-attacks are pretty impressive, from giant fireballs to zillions of exploding teddies bouncing around on the floor. The best looking one, however, has to be Mamma's vortex bomb, which ripples the entire floor around where he stands.

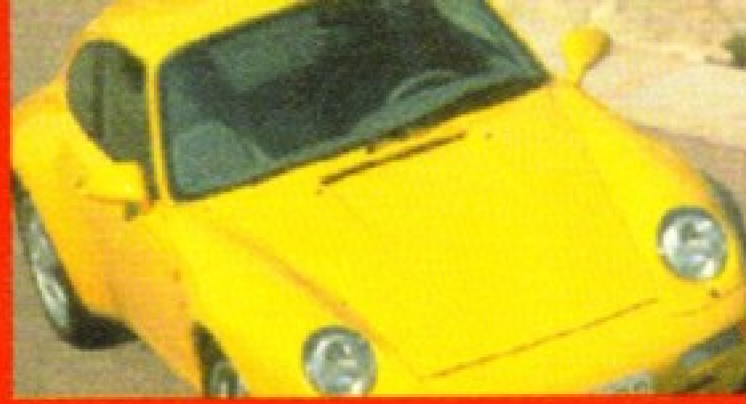




A simple and brutal classic of violence in the same vein as a pick-axe handle to the head.

graphics	88
sound	82
playability	89
lastability	80

overall **84%**







BY	EA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	RACING
RELEASE	JULY

Already doing the rounds on 3DO and PlayStation, The Need For Speed, arrives on the Saturn looking to make up some mileage on the likes of Daytona and Sega Rally. But despite some exciting moments, and a spectacular crash now and then, it doesn't look like overtaking.

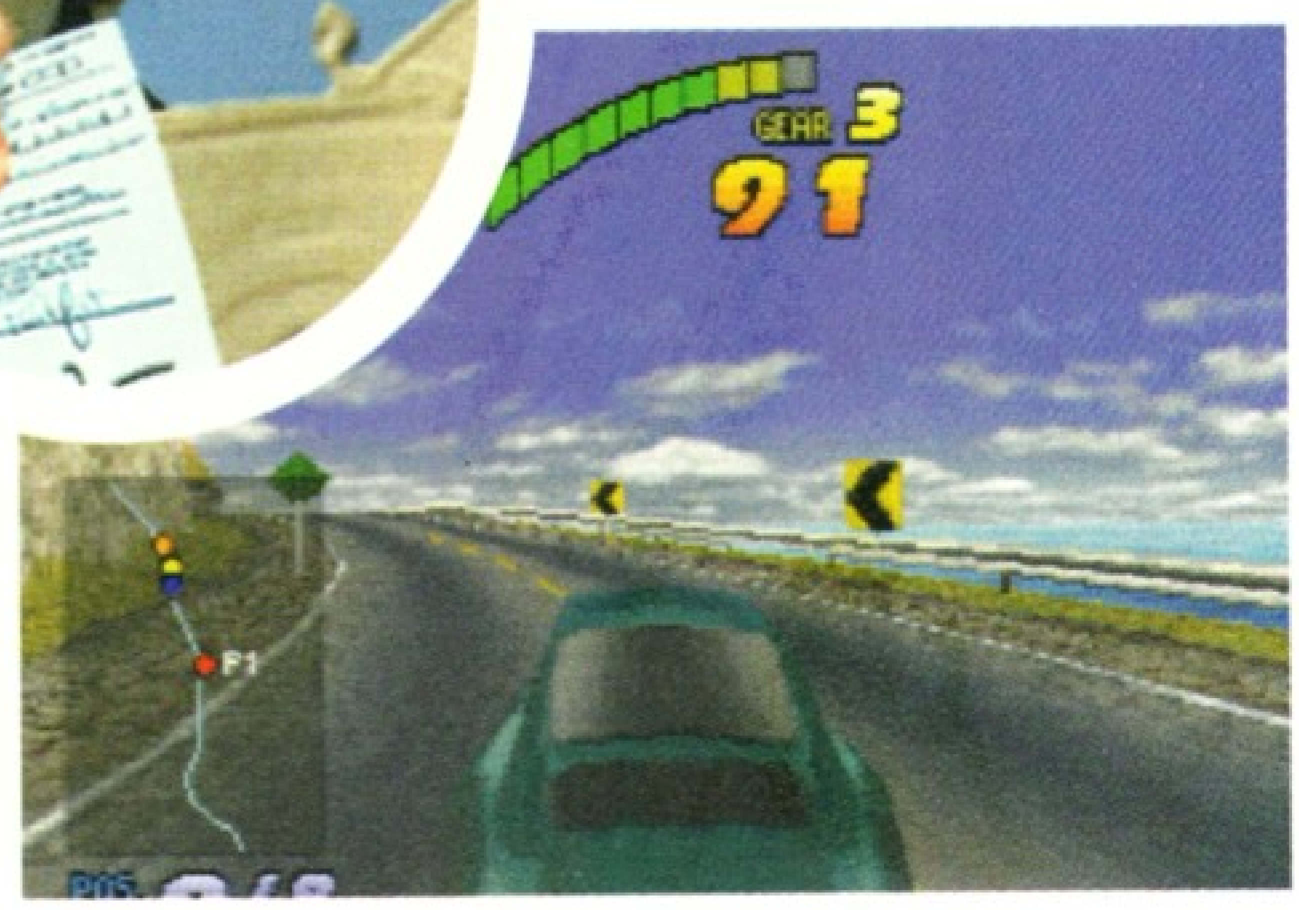
When you hit 17 one thing in particular becomes a priority — getting a car in order to embark on a more mature pose technique. Now at last, you're in a position you always used to envy. No more heartbreak at being dumped by your girlfriend for that guy with the Vauxhall Nova, because now that's you!! Or at least it would be if you didn't have to go through the irritating business of learning to drive in the first place, or having to take a test with an instructor that looks like a brylcreemed praying mantis. In fact, when you do finally learn to drive you quickly come to realise that it's often more bother than it's worth. I suppose that's why racing sims are so popular; plenty of thrills and no paying for petrol or speeding tickets. Even the crashes leave you with limbs still intact and functioning. The one thing it won't do of course is win you the favour of your fifth-form sweetheart.





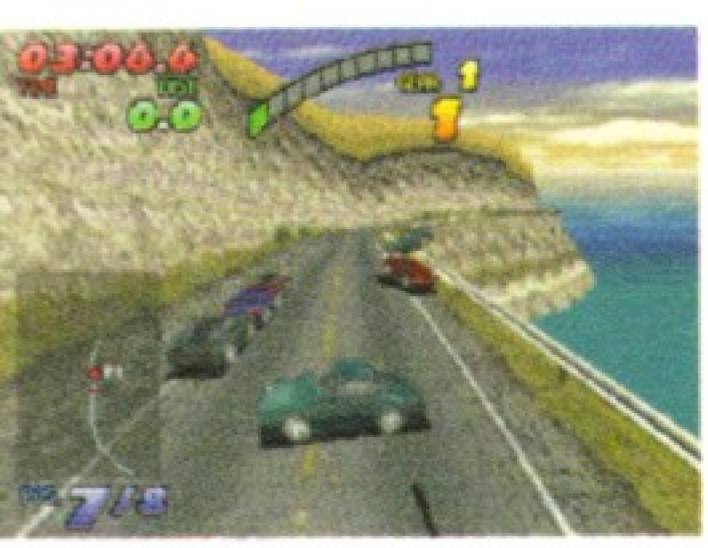


The Need For Speed might have been considered ultra-realistic a couple of years ago but, with the arrival of Sega Rally and a new Daytona game in the pipeline, it's already falling behind in the graphics and animation departments, even though these in themselves are quite respectable. One of the game's boasts when it appeared on the 3DO was that it managed to simulate driving more accurately than any other game. This isn't altogether an idle boast either. As well as including ten very flash real-life automobiles like the Porsche 911, the Lamborghini Diablo etc., The Need For Speed includes lots of stats on each model, pointing out all that confusing stuff like how many horses it races like, rates of acceleration, top speeds and so on. This isn't useless info either, each car driving as its statistics suggest, and handling in a fashion that's unlike any other Saturn driving game. The problem is that such dedication to realism actually works against it. It feels a little too much like driving which is pretty mundane unless you're zooming around a grand prix circuit or taking to tiny braken lanes in a rally car. In trying to keep both the serious driving enthusiast and the lover of manic speed happy, it winds up somewhere in the middle, a lukewarm attempt at both of them.





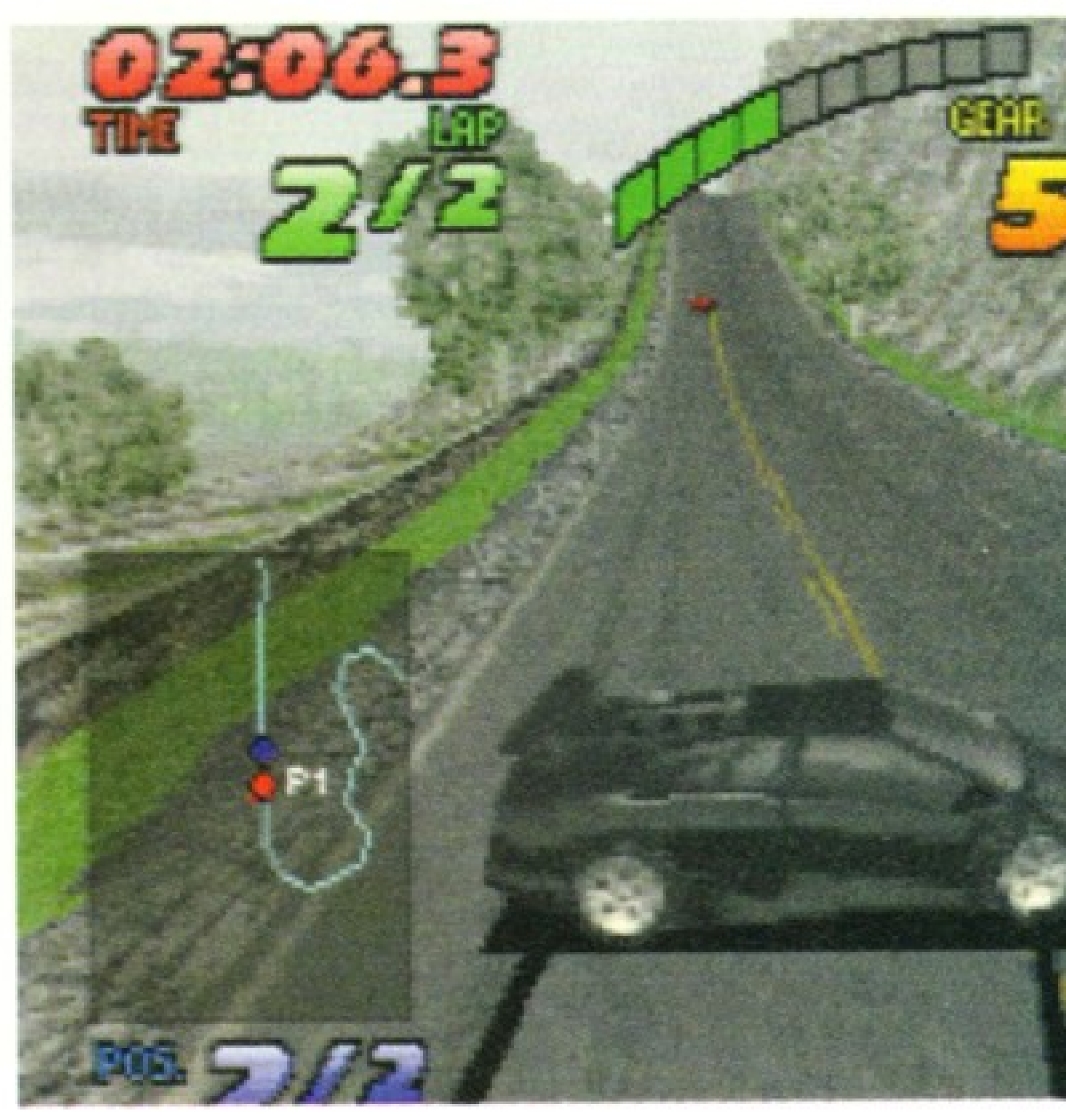




Among the more exciting elements in The Need For Speed are the crashes which occur with some frequency, especially when you're doing it simply for the thrill. The reason there are so many is because in head-to-head mode you race while all the regular drivers are out going about their daily business. This also entails avoiding traffic cops who'll pull you up if they can catch you and promptly hand over a speeding ticket. Elements like this give The Need For Speed a more light-hearted edge, akin in some ways to Road Rash. If this was expanded on, it would stand out as quite a unique racing game. As it is, the 'serious racing sim' persona rears up and demands you respect each car's unique motoring characteristics and be sensible by driving the right way all the time.

So does it satisfy your need for speed? In fits and starts, yes, aided by the chance to take part in some spectacular crashes. Overall though, this game rarely moves out of the middle lane.

ROB









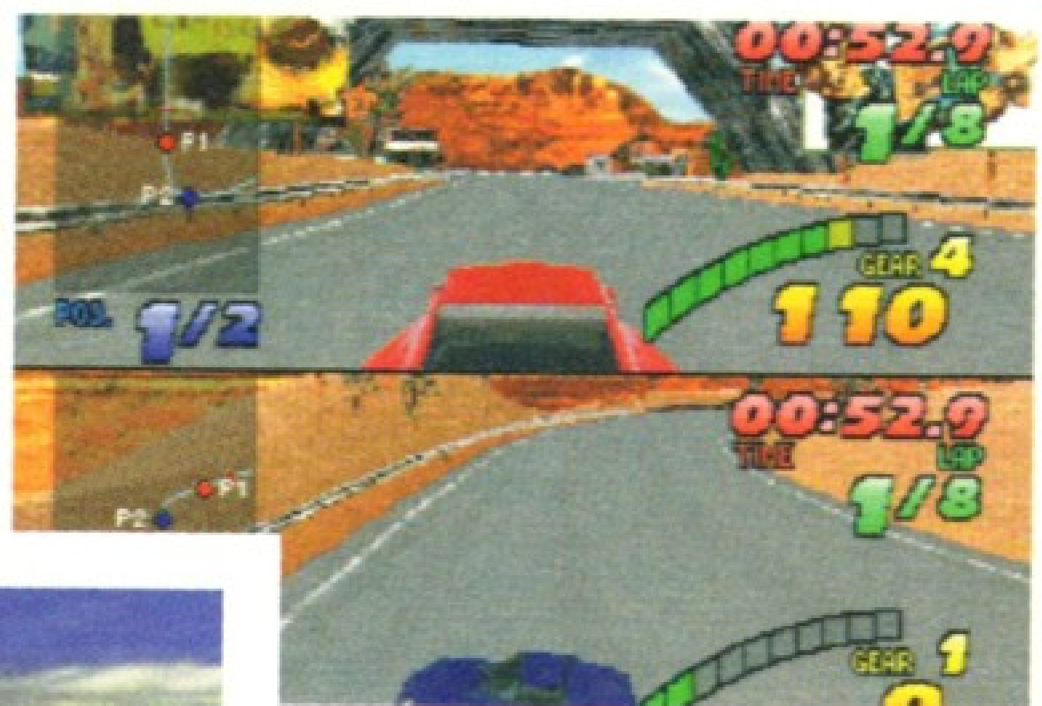
This is the tunnel you'll find on the coastal road. There are lots of different types of tunnels in the game, from the scumy metallic city ones to lovely wooden ones in the forest. Ahhh.

THE NEED FOR SPEED



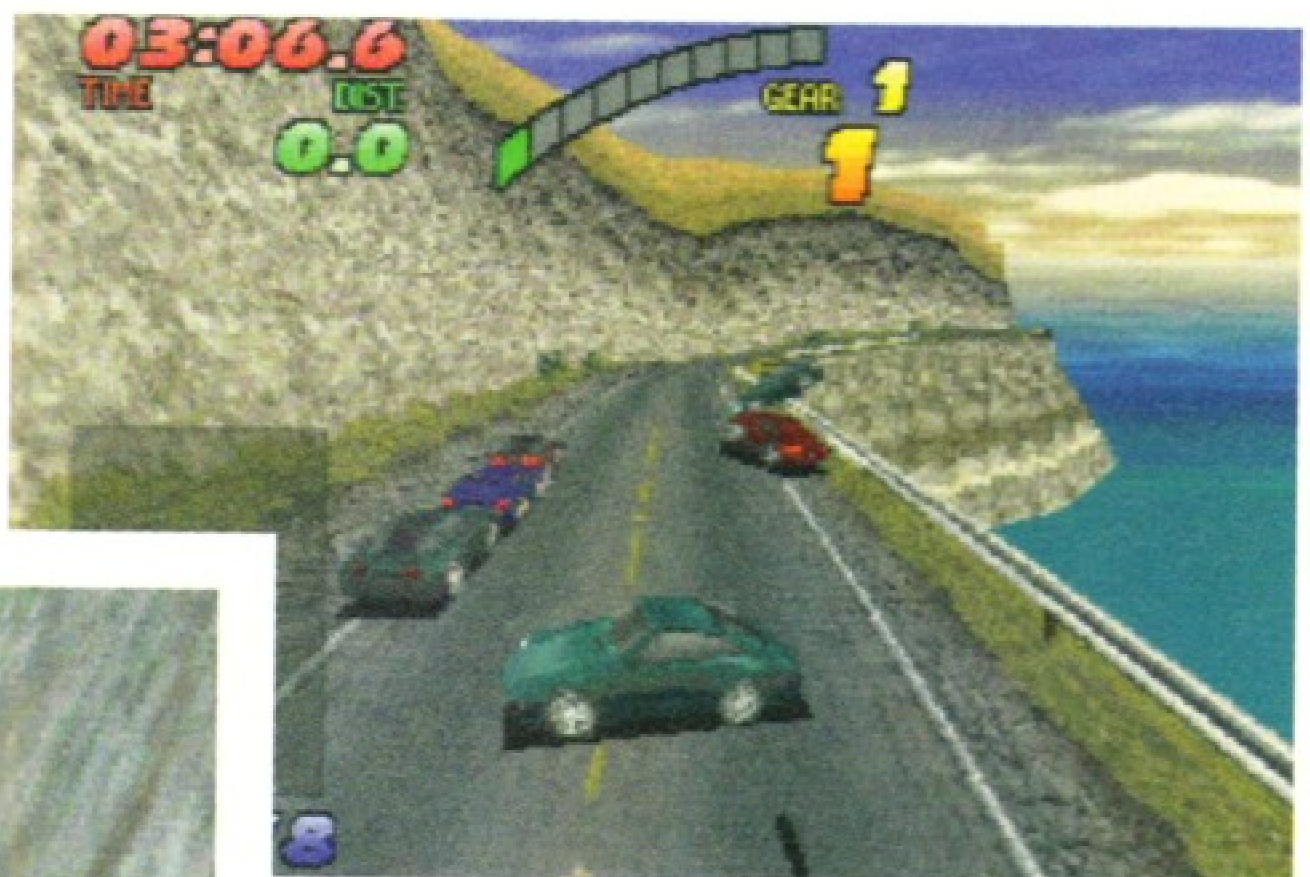


Hey there! This is the in the driving seat view. There are four in all; one flat against the windscreen and two above and behind.



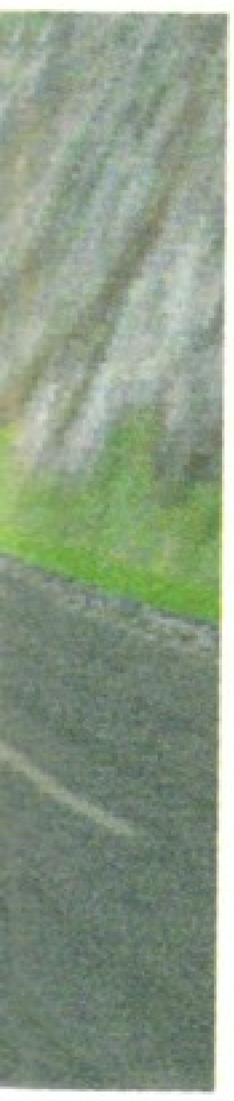
The Need For Speed features a split-screen mode so you can take on pals in the race to become the uber-driver.







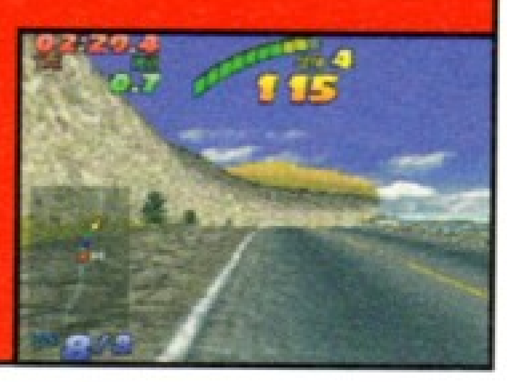




THE LIVING ROAD




There's quite a variety of landscapes to travel through in The Need For Speed. You might like to sample the winding forest roads where your gear changing skills are put to the test. Or maybe take a scenic journey along the coastal road. Or how about bombing it down the long straights of the desert. There's even a balloon fair giving you the chance to totally lose concentration!

Nothing particularly wrong with The Need For Speed, it just looks a bit on the dated side, and with a new Daytona on the way, this is one for those with an excess of games cash.

graphics	80
sound	82
playability	76
lastability	72

overall

75%







REVIEW

BY	EA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	JULY/AUGUST

Alien invasion - it's the drug of the nation! From the X-Files to the new film, Independence Day, alien fever is reaching millennial pitch. Shockwave Assault decides to throw its oar in with the rest but from the look of things, it's sinking fast.





I suppose you could describe Shockwave Assault as a kind of inter-active movie, although to be fair it's largely gameplay orientated with the FMV cutting in now and then to fill out the plot. Not that the plot needs much filling out. To summarize; aliens have invaded Earth and you must destroy them. And there it is. Naturally you've got a state-of-the-art combat aircraft to help you out, packed to the teeth with an assortment of potent weaponry. But the rest is simply a matter of listening to instructions from headquarters and shooting anything that looks vaguely unhuman. Oh, and there is the chance to share a few gung-ho high-fives with your buddies in the post-conflict FMV sequences. Although you can't really play this part of the game of course.

So what is there to the gameplay then? Hmmm, not much really. You're armed with regular lasers, thrusters and missiles, which are renewed along with your shields when you fly under a certain vessels. You then simply have to control the cross-hair in alignment with the aircraft, and shoot the enemies when it targets red. Most of them are either tripod types like something out of War of the Worlds or flying aliens that look like segments of lime. Sort of.

Each part of your mission carries an objective. It might simply be to destroy every alien invader in the area, but more often than not it comes with certain complications like having to protect oil refineries or destroy a ***blah blah***. despite these objectives, what the game comes down to is lots of endless roaming about, targeting and shooting.

The repetitive nature of the action in Shockwave Assault is one of the factors that contributes to its utter blandness. With only the odd alien knocking about, you quickly become bored, and the fact that your aircraft seems to by permanently set the OAP speed doesn't help enliven the proceedings. Shockwave Assault reminds me a bit of Titan Wars, a game that was similar not only in its bland approach to the gameplay but also in its hugely naff FMV elements which are cheese personified. It's not even as if the inspiring graphics make up for the lack of genuine excitement. The texture mapped landscapes (apparently taken from real aerial photographs) look ok, but the alien ships and animation are all distinctly sub-standard. What's more, the detection on the crossfire isn't always entirely accurate. You might be aiming directly at an enemy but your lasers will be hitting something next to it or in front and behind it. The inter-active elements that come in the shape of other pilots and your commander appearing on the monitor to provide objectives and so on, might seem like fun but it is in fact more annoying than anything. If you're shooting civilian buildings for the hell of it, your commander sarcastically points out that "They're on our side". If you're idly wandering about, bored out of your skull, shooting at anything, she barks "This is not a game lieutenant!" Well, she's right there at least.

ROB







This is a collector. If you have any old Victorian tables or Art Deco statuettes then this chappie might well be interested.







Shock Wave Assault







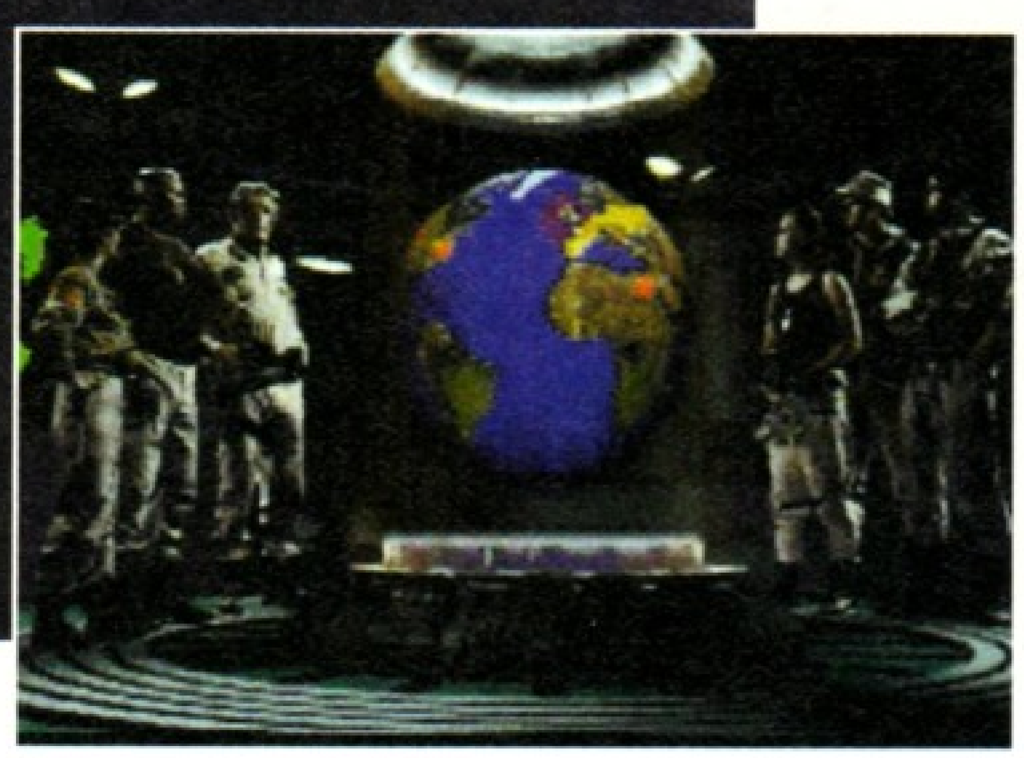
This is one of the alien space craft you can expect to see. Beautiful isn't it. And dead!

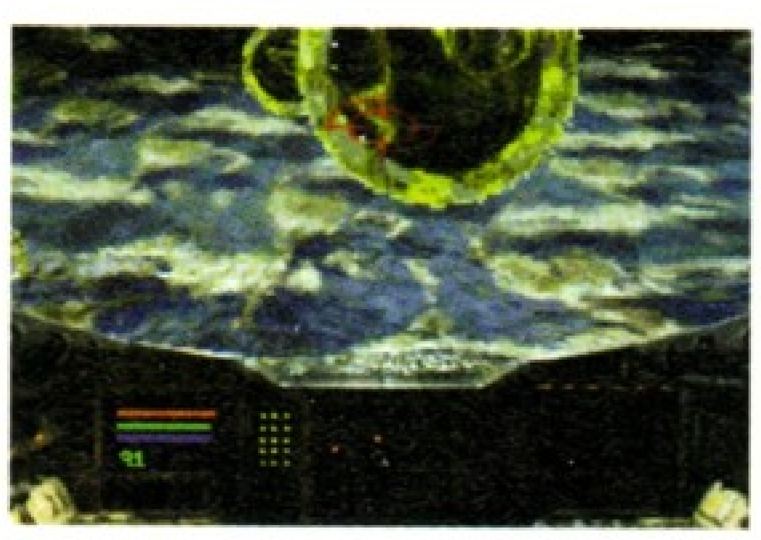




"It looks like we've got a problem here General. We're caught in the 'thesps vortex' on the fringes of the 'actor galaxy'.









Shockwave Assault is a bit of a disaster all round, what with bland, repetitive game-play, sub-standard graphics, and the usual dose of naff FMV. You might be into your aliens but this is an invasion to avoid.

graphics	70
sound	72
playability	54
lastability	55

overall

55%

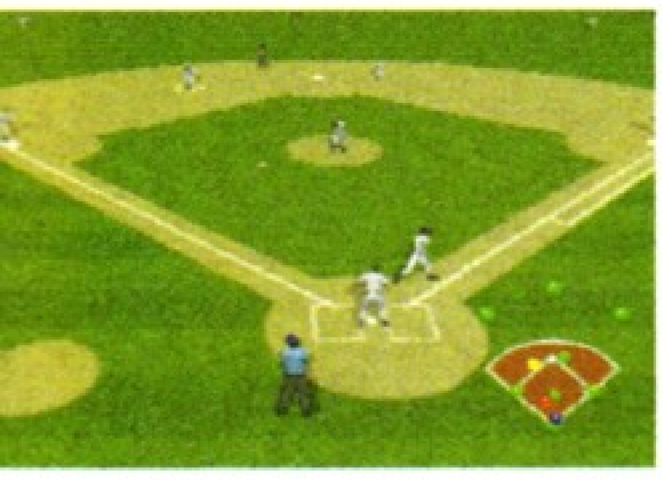
BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SPORTS SIMULATION
RELEASE	JULY 1996

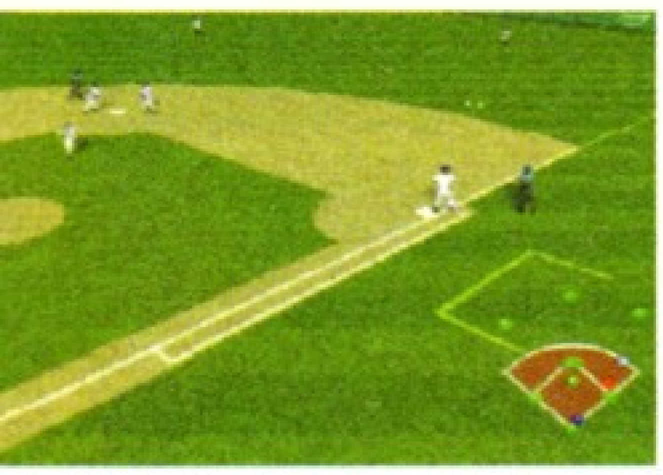
Baseball bats are usually used for doling out severe beatings in this country. It might surprise you to find out that that's not the purpose for which they were invented. No, they're actually designed to play baseball with. Learn how to put that stick to more humane use with Franky baby...



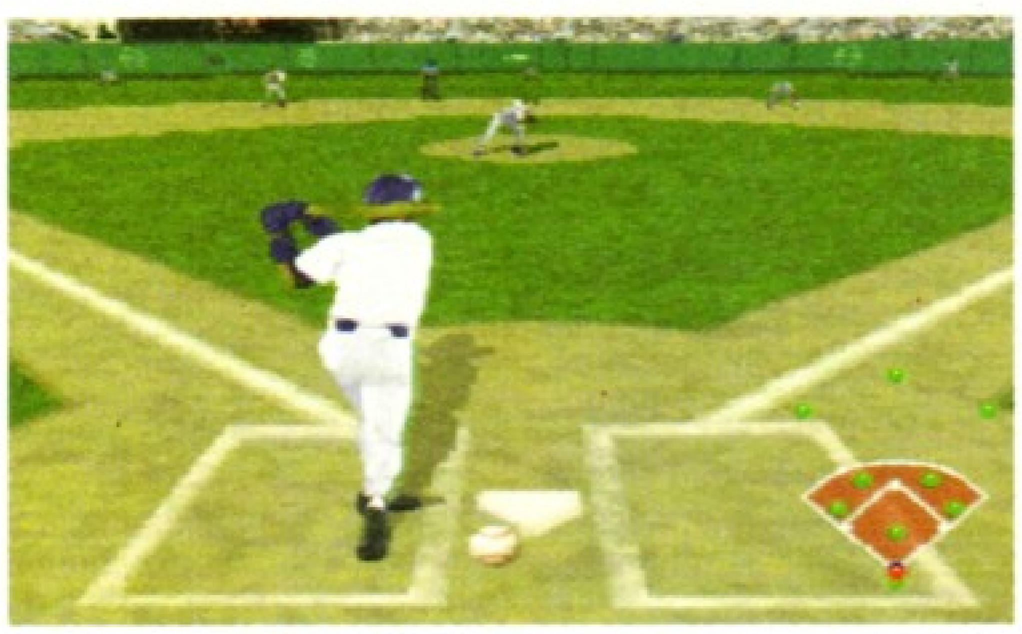


Grr! Baseball is a hard game! Grr! It's about Big Hurt, taking the pain, wearing warpaint and growling. It's not sissy rounders at all, oh no, it's got nothing at all in common with the game girls have to play at school instead of cricket. And there's nothing soft about having to hold the bat in both hands, as opposed to the single paw permitted in rounders. Heck, baseball is a man's game, and anyone who says otherwise has Frank Thomas to argue with. And Frank Thomas don't have no name like no goddam accountant, you hear me? He's an all-American tickertape-parading sporting hero. Just to prove what a super sports bloke he is, Frank has lent his name to a computerised version of his game for those too weak to participate physically.





Obviously there aren't many fans of Frank's favoured pursuit in this country, which happens to be the national sport of America. Otherwise there'd be some sort of national baseball league on the telly instead of all this football business. However, don't be daunted by the rules, as they're dead simple. You're out if you miss three pitches or have one hit caught – if you're not out make your way around the four bases hoping you're not caught out by a base person on your journey between each one. The really complex bit comes with the thousands of stats which American sports fans don't seem to be able to live without, all of which are heavily present in Big Hurt Baseball. Indeed, it takes about a hundred thousand years to actually get to the gameplay, such is the number of options and stat screens standing in your way.

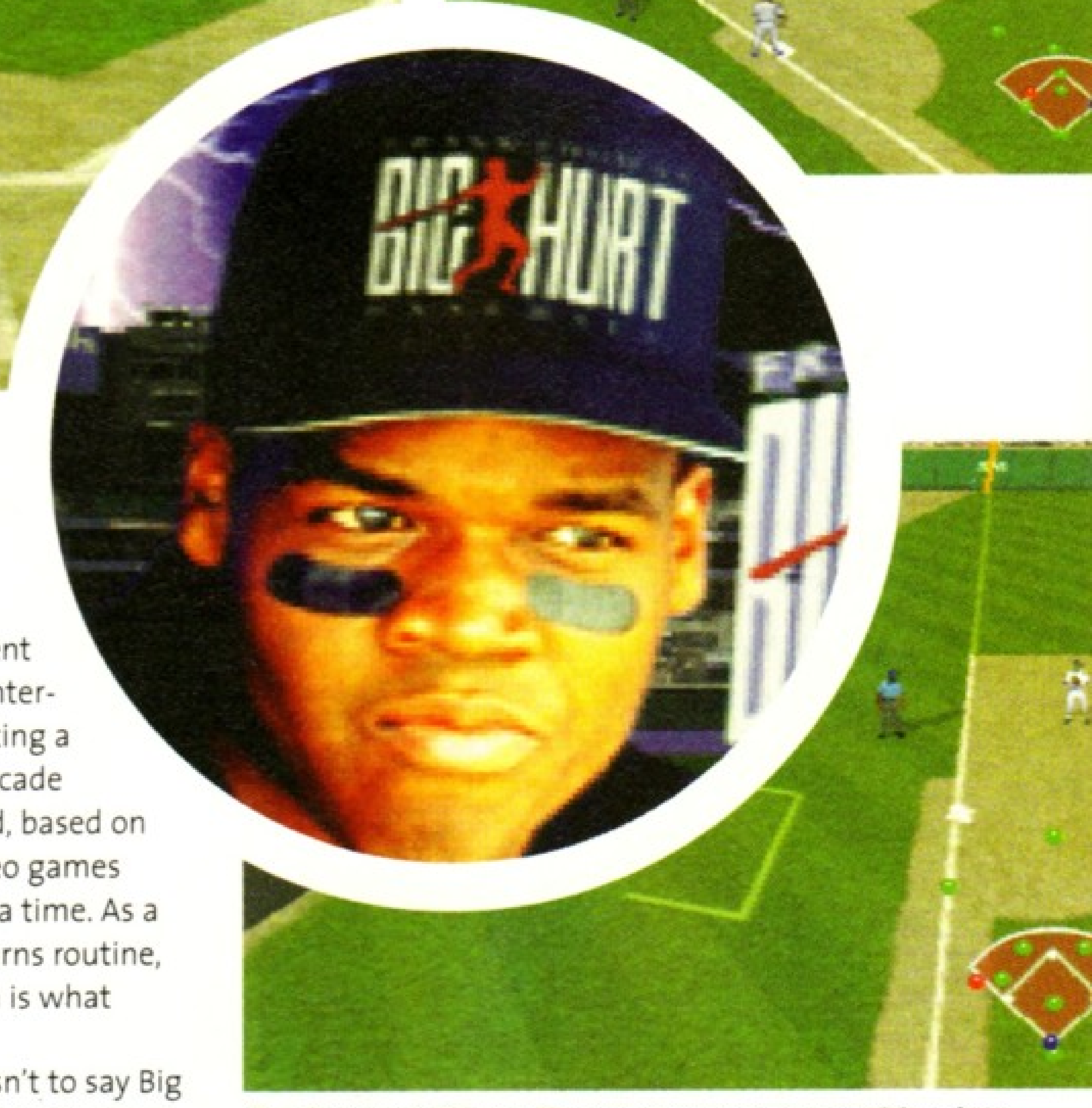


Once you do get to the action it's a fairly straightforward process anyone even vaguely familiar with any baseball game on any format could get to grips with. Different combinations of buttons and joypad directions produce different throws and swings. Once the ball is struck the camera pans out to a full overview of the field, where the batting team decide whether to run and the pitching team try to get them all out.

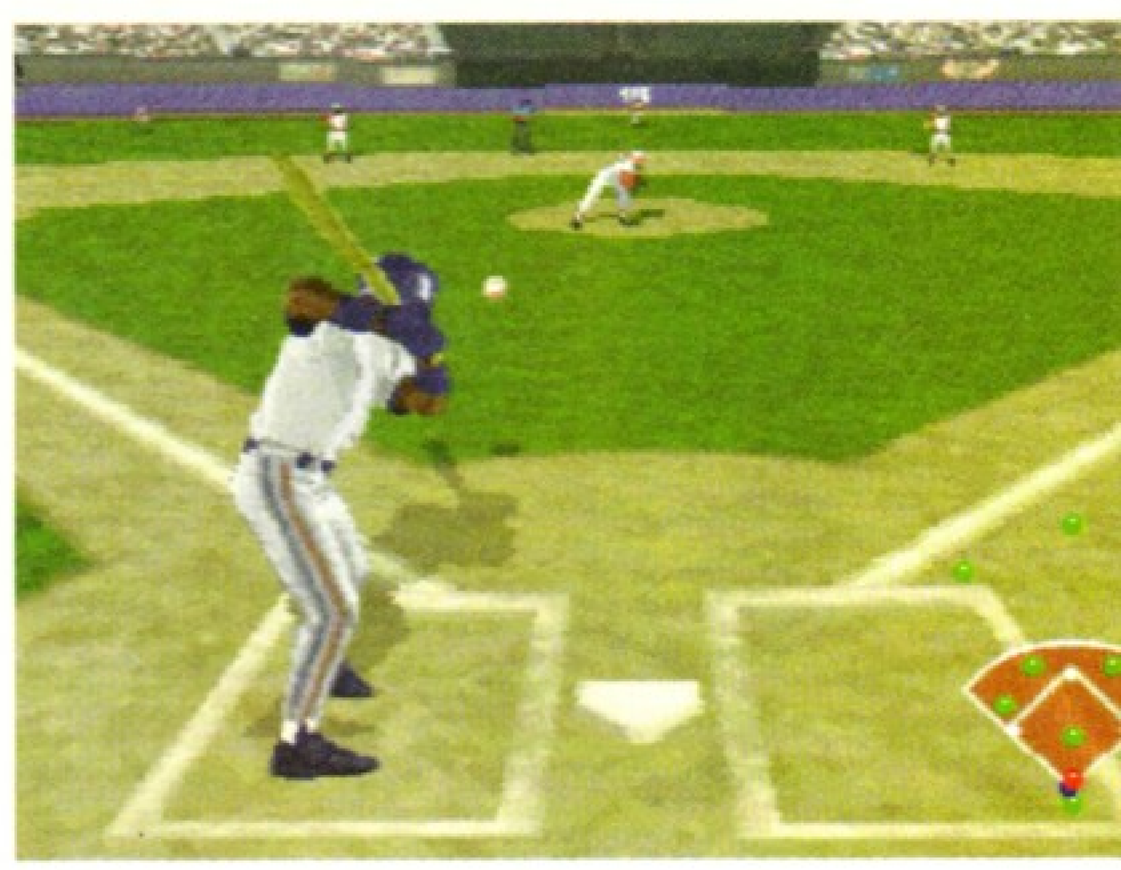
This is where the trouble sets in. Certain sports not so popular in this country, like ice hockey, can make excellent games, usually because there's a lot of interplay between team members, necessitating a fast-paced use of strategy as much as arcade skill. Baseball is far more straightforward, based on individual athletic ability and giving video games players only one thing to think about at a time. As a result the sport is reduced to a taking-turns routine, instead of a fluid ongoing game – which is what makes an exciting piece of software.

This isn't to say Big Hurt is awful. It's about as good as a baseball game can be. It's just that practically no-one in the UK is going to know who all these players are or care about their fortune on the killing field that is a baseball diamond. If you're one of the initiated few with a baseball interest, this is OK, although it's nothing you won't have seen on the Megadrive to be honest, apart from the now-ubiquitous choice of camera angles. The majority of gamers would be best spending their money on something more universally appealing. Oh yeah, and the "commentary" is absolutely crap.

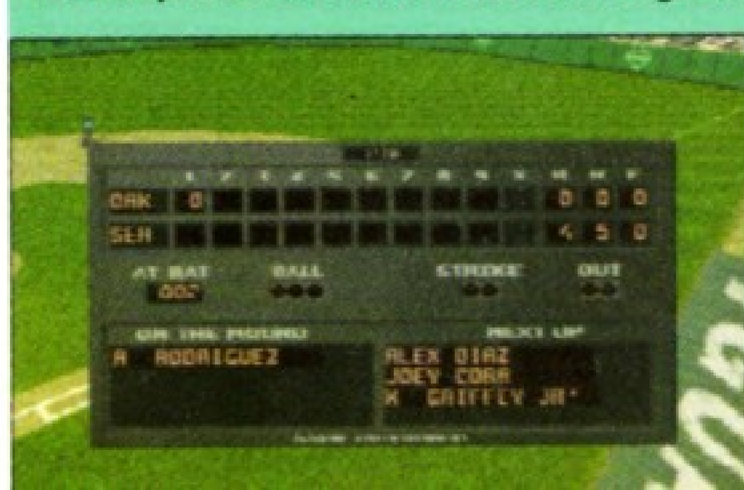
ROB

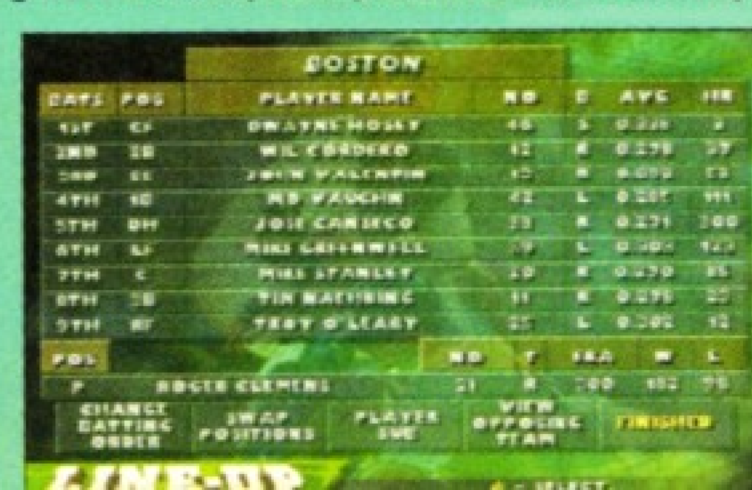


The giant head of Frank Thomas appears as an apparition above the outfield, inspiring his home team to greater glory and striking fear into the hearts of his cowardly enemies. Truly, he is a God amongst computer game-licensed baseball players.



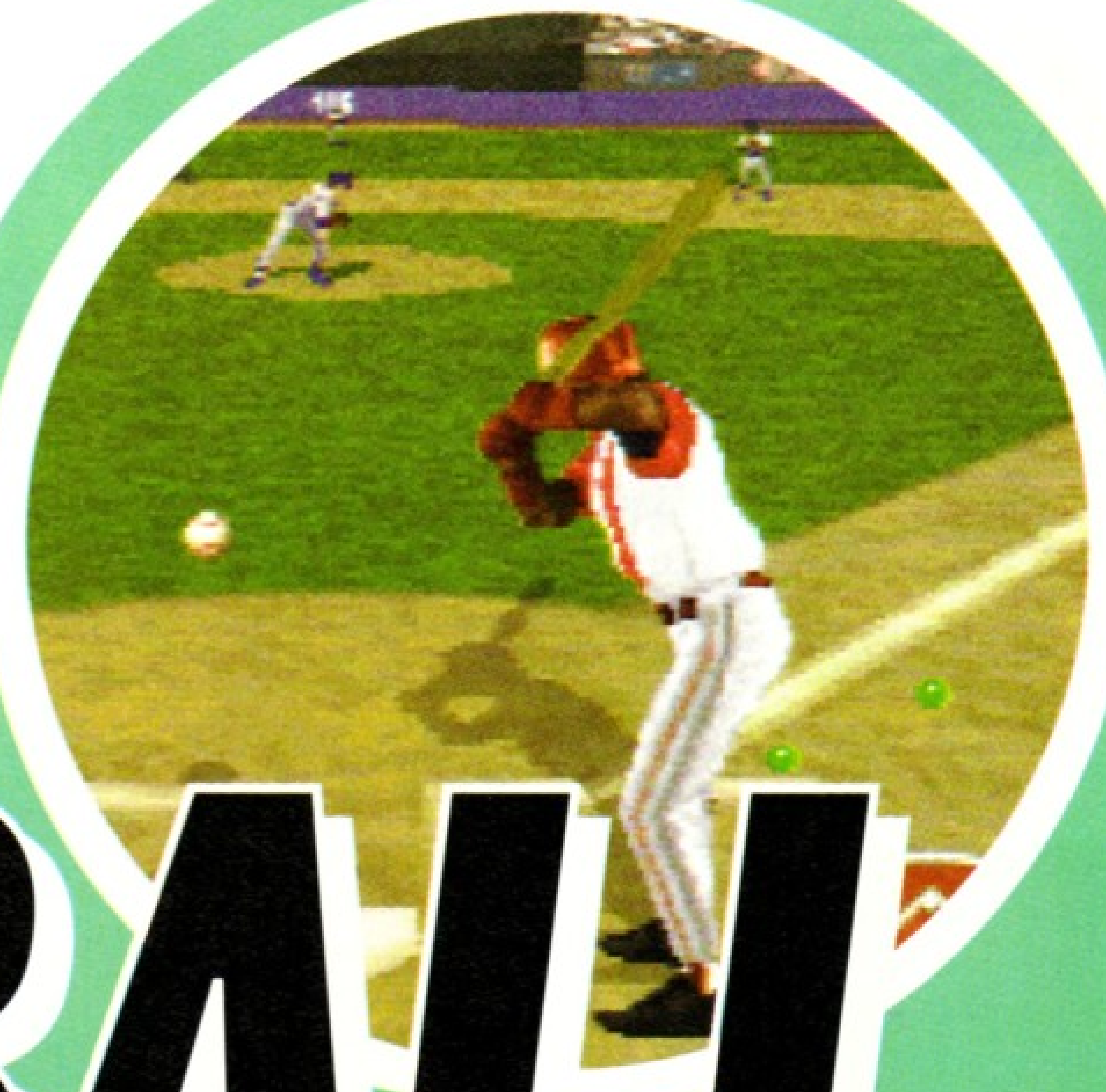
American sports fans like their stats, that's for sure. That's why every time you see two people discussing sport in American films they're always wittering on about RBIs and yard averages and things, instead of "Did you see that ace goal?" like we do. Anyway, no American sports game would be complete without herds of useless figures. Big Hurt 'ne exceptrion pas'. Here are some for you to gaze at.







Frank Thomas BIG HURT BASEBALL





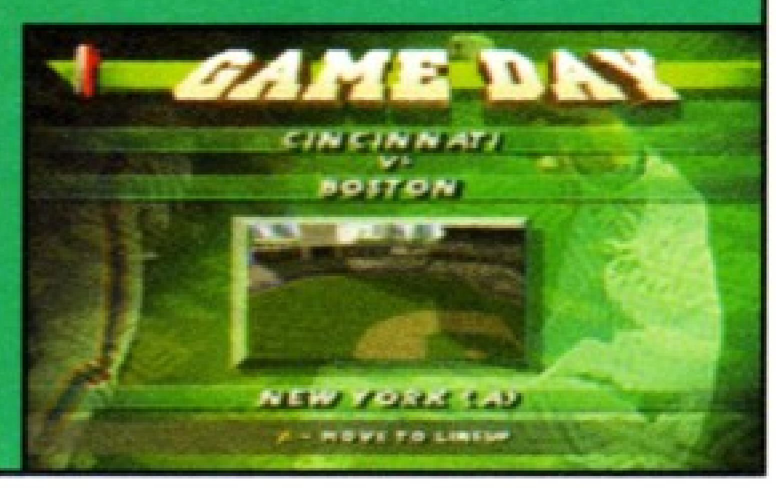
Hit the ball hard enough to send it quite far away from where you stand. This way the fielders will have less chance of "outing" you as you jog about.



STADIUMS ROCK!

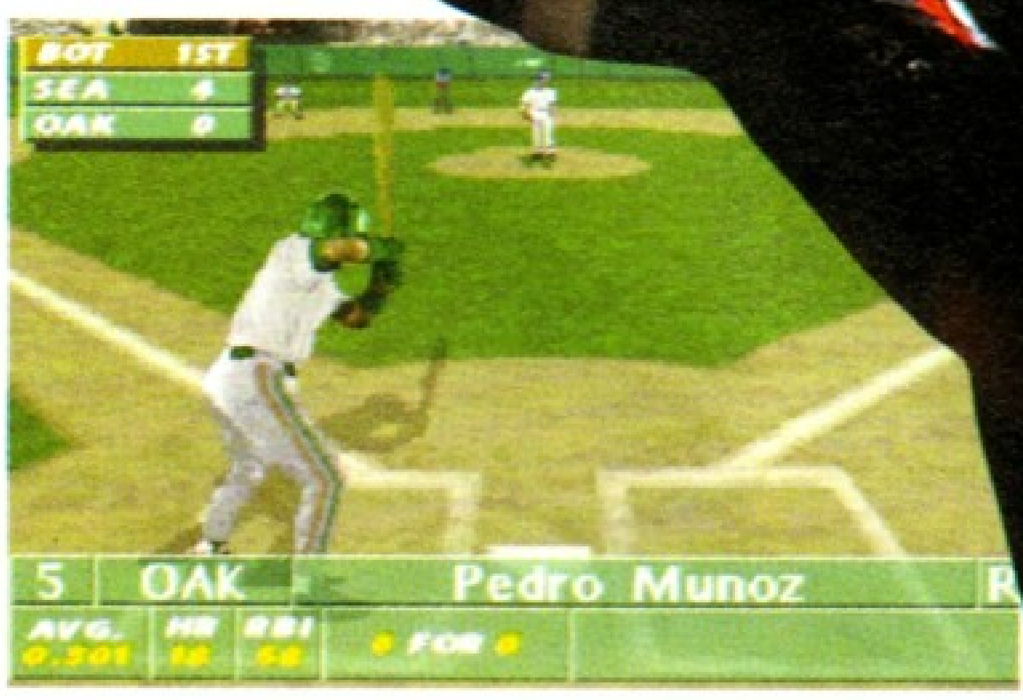
Big Hurt certainly has a treat in store for fans of transatlantic architecture. It would appear every major baseball stadium in every major city in the States has been faithfully reproduced in Big Hurt. Pick whichever one you like and you'll get a full look not just at the insides of the place, but also the skyline visible all around it, which is supposedly spot on. Obviously we can't vouch for this, having never been to see Denver play at home, but it's the thought that counts, eh?







Incensed at the giant size of the new baseballs, the baseball union leaders call everybody out.

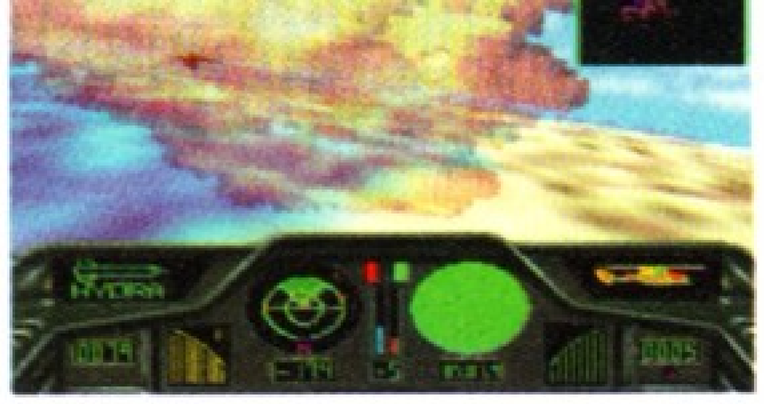




A fair approximation of a minority sport which probably won't convert any sceptics.

graphics	71
sound	58
playability	64
lastability	51

overall **58%**


REVIEW



BY	VIRGIN
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	JULY 1996

We like helicopters at SSM. In fact, we've even got a plastic police helicopter toy which flies up into the air when you pull on a bit of string at the base. That's how great we think helicopters are. Which is good news for helicopter games.

Helicopter games have long held a fascination for games programmers. Perhasp that's because they grew up weaned on a steady diet of Airwolf and Blue Thunder, heads filled with the potent image of a shiny whirlybird rising into view over the edge of a rocky precipice. Or perhaps they've watched At Play in the Fields of the Lord one time too many and are obsessed with napalming anyone they see. Whatever the reasons it's a safe bet that any new console wandering around on its own looking lost will soon be set upon by a pack of chopper games pulling at its coat sleeves and trying to lead its software collection astray. To continue labouring this analogy, up until now Thunderhawk has been known and loved as the Fagin of helicopter shoot 'em ups, overlord and sometimes inspiration for the junior titles in the genre. One such of these is Virgin's new title, Operation: Blackfire.

It's got a rather more intriguing plot than Thunderhawk, which concerns the US military keeping recovered alien technology in secret bases. Predictably, one of the best military geniuses decides to steal it all and use the new-found power to take over the whole world. Only one man in a comparably ordinary helicopter can mount the covert missions needed to destroy Gideon (for it is he) and his large-army-sized "band" of terrorists with their tanks and their guns, and their guns and their bombs.

You've got a bit of back-up from an intelligence team at HQ, who brief you on each sortie you fly. There are three sorties to a mission, and nine missions in the game (making a total of 27 levels), and each of these has a primary target which needs destroying, and sometimes a secondary target which needs destroying too. Yep, the emphasis of Blackfire is definintely on blowing things up. The only trouble is that helicopters are notoriously tricky to handle, thanks to the number of ways in which they move (turning, sliding, up and down etc). So the first enemy you face is your own controls. However, Blackfire makes things fairly simple with a straightforward button arrangement, and a choice of definable controls for pernickety players. Once you've got the hang of flying the Blackfire it's time to take on Gideon's forces. And what forces that man has. Within seconds of starting your first mission you'll find yourself surrounded, assaulted by missiles from every direction. The only way to rescue yourself is to use your auto-targetting computer to aim your many (but not infinite) missiles and bullets whilst hoping you don't accidentally veer into any of the billions of missiles which show up on your radar. Reapeat this evade/destroy/continue triptych until all the missions are completed.

This is basically where Blackfire lets itself down a bit. It seems that the challenge has far more to do with sheer weight of numbers than tactics or geographically-inspired strategy. You're not given enough time to pick off foes one by one, you have to wait until you're surrounded and blow up a load of them at once – which sets you up for a fast and untimely death. Once your targeting computer is blown out, or you lose an engine, or your steering is conked, it's only a matter of time until you take the big dive. The murky texture mapping which looks more like various shades of sick than terrain doesn't aid the atmosphere either. Basically, Blackfire is a good game engine saddled with a disappointing level premise. The mission objectives increase in their complexity, but the action required to complete each one doesn't. It's enjoyable enough for a while, but don't expect a classic – or even more than a week's enjoyment.

RAD



Oh dear – the sky is swarming with evil enemy aircraft. Now would be the right time to use a cluster bomb and run away. Just look at that radar – there's a load more evil enemies on their way. Luckily you don't have to panic because this is just a screenshot.











This mission asks you to destroy a whole gaggle of enemy supply trucks. If you don't get them all in one go they run away and you have to track them down – which uses a lot of precious fuel. The best thing to do is use your big guns to get them all in straight off. Destroy everything!! Ahahahaaa!!!



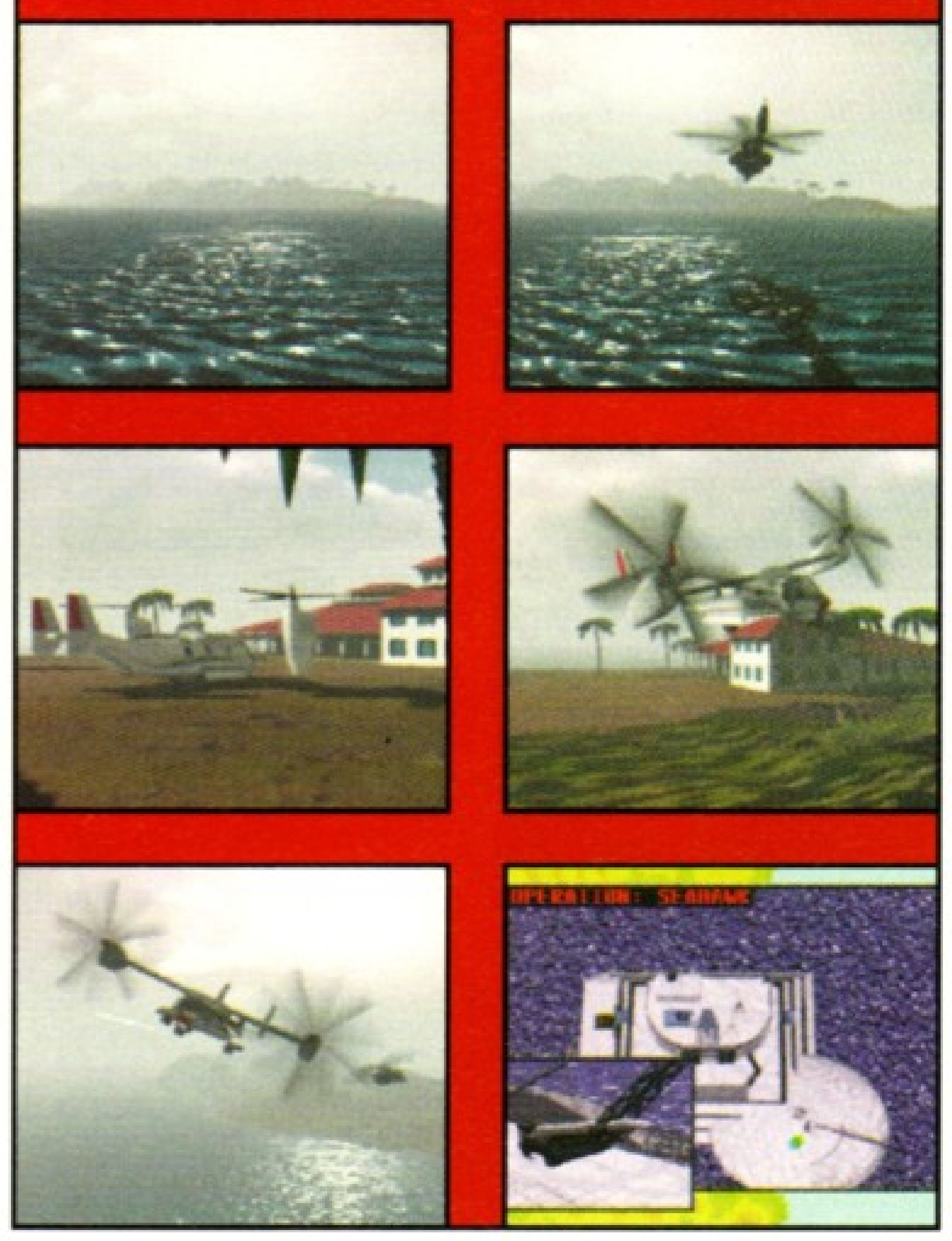


Operation BLACKFIRE



DON'T LOSE THE PLOT

The good thing about powerful consoles is the amount of extra storytelling apparatus they provide you with. No longer do you need to rely on scrolling text in-between levels, oh no. Operation Blackfire keeps you up to speed with what's happening in the game world with radio messages playing constantly through each level – both from members of your side and your scornful opponents! Plus there are computer-animated FMV intermissions featuring footage of your helicopter destroying things and being congratulated by your invisible team mates.





That big missile isn't in the game. It's part of the artwork above. Sorry.



Red sky at morning, three minute warning.



The effects of a big cluster bomb in action. This missiles splits into lots of little missiles which fly in all directions, destroying loads of enemies in one go. And yourself if you're too close. So stay far away, that's our advice. You'll get in to all sorts of trouble otherwise.



A nice idea, but Blackfire doesn't really have what it takes to grab the player's attention for long.

graphics	86
sound	84
playability	78
lastability	72

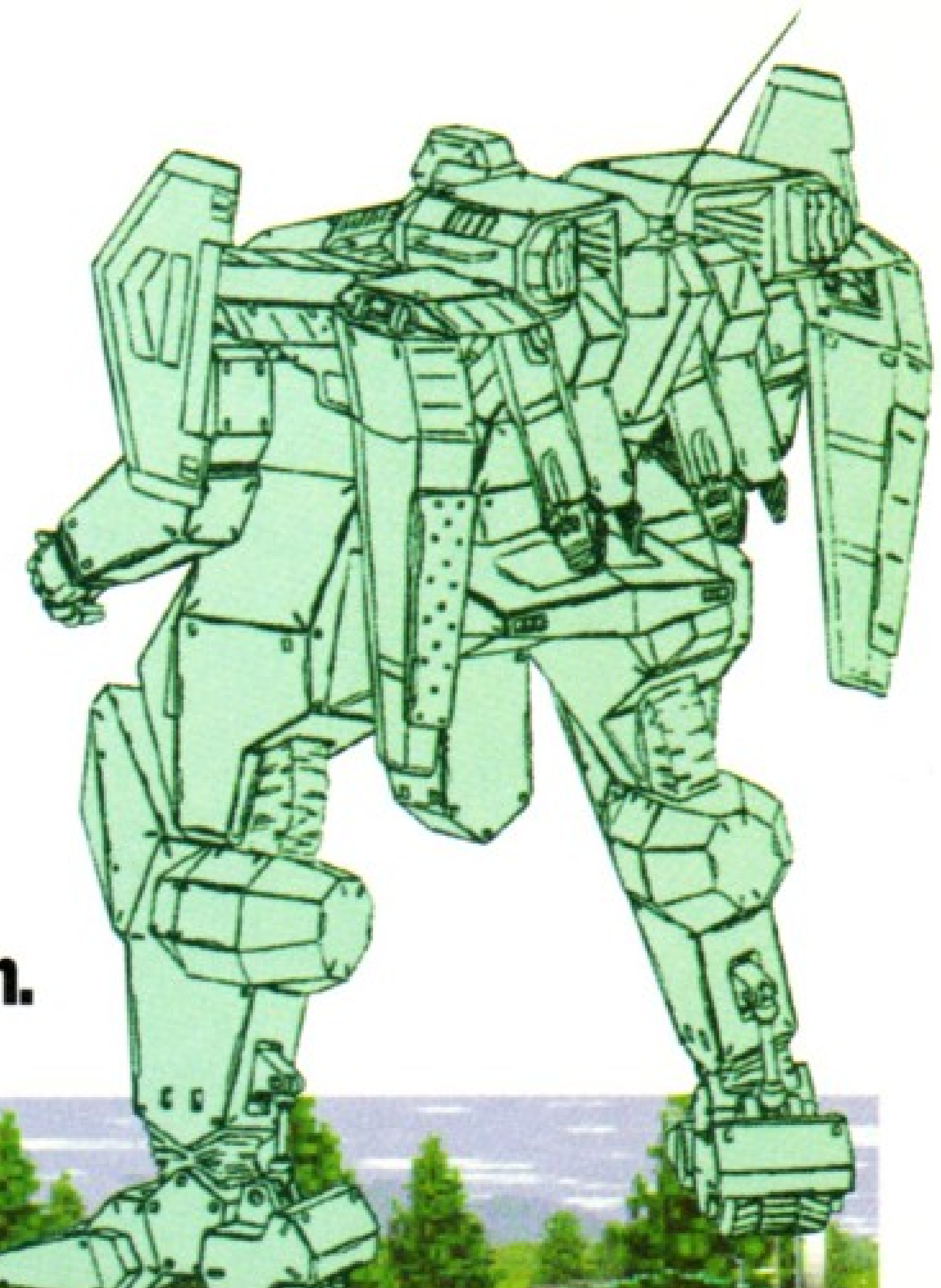
overall

75%

REVIEW

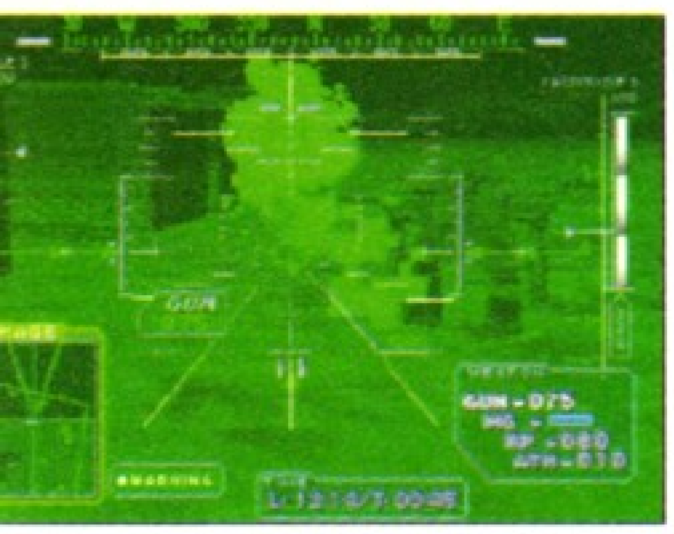
BY	SEGA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	AUGUST

Angry at the world? Why not step into a thirty-foot robot and destroy your neighbours? Can't afford a robot? Then go down the shops and have a look at Gungriffon.





Sometimes it's easy to forget just how long it takes to program a game, although even arcade conversions with all the fiddly design work already out of the way take months. When we first saw Gungriffon ever it was under the imaginative and evocative title of 3D Polygon, and it was being developed alongside Panzer Dragoon (then called Action Game) as one of the first Saturn titles. Obviously it's taken them a bit of time to get the final product in, given that Panzer's SEQUEL has been in the shops for months now, but looking at how Gungriffon has turned out you can definitely see that there's been a lot of time and attention lavished upon it. In fact it's almost hard to believe that it was scheduled to appear in the first wave of Saturn games, as opposed to the third(ish).





Now, you regular readers, the ones who support our ailing rent cheques and put food in our mouths, you'll already have read the Gungriffon showcase we printed in issue 6, and for that we thank you. However, there are some people, people who aren't regular readers, who might not exactly know what Gungriffon is about. Well, we'll tell you, as long as you promise to keep buying our magazine every month from now on. Promise? All right then – Gungriffon is a robot war game set in a dark future, where giant continental alliances fight each other for the precious few scraps of fossil fuel and mineral resources left on planet Earth. You play the pilot of a giant robot war machine, and in each level you're dropped in the middle of a combat zone with a specific mission in mind. Watch the briefing before the stage carefully as it details a map of the area, enemy troop locations and what exactly it is your commanders want of you. From here it's a simple matter of crushing and destroying all that lies in front of you (apart from the friendly forces).

This might sound the premise for a thousand giant robot games, or helicopter games, or space ship games, or any number of other kinds of games – and indeed it is. But it isn't the idea behind Gungriffon that's exciting, it's the execution. Gungriffon features some of the smoothest and most convincingly animated graphics going, especially considering the free play environment. Although graphics, they say, maketh not a game, in this case they certainly act to enhance the atmosphere, and it's this which makes Gungriffon such an engrossing game to play. Along with all the destruction.

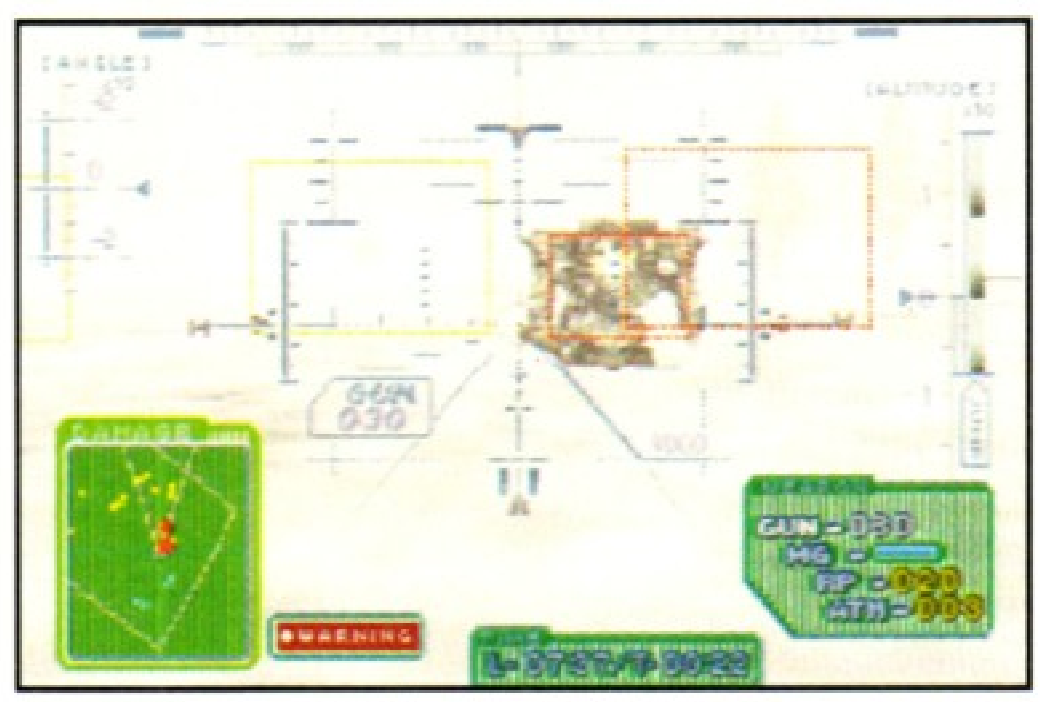
The missions that await you in Gungriffon are many and varied in concept, terrain, difficulty, tactics and even lighting. And by differences in lighting, we're not talking about the usual day/evening thing – some Gungriffon stages are set in pitch blackness where it's impossible to see just about anything except muzzle flashes, which necessitates the use of green-screen night vision goggles, which have their own drawbacks. Much of Gungriffon's development time has obviously gone into designing the levels in an effort to make first-person free-movement blasting interesting for more than one level. The other units engaged in combat around you, the instructions crackling through the radio and the constant element of surprise death keep you attuned to the game even during quiet moments.

There are already a couple of games like Gungriffon floating around, like Thunderhawk and Blackfire (reviewed this issue). However, they all fail to capture the spirit (and technical achievements for that matter) of Sega's entry to the genre. Maybe that's because it's had all the time in infinity spent upon writing it, but what you're left with is a superlative smashing and destroying game.

The Saturn doesn't score so highly for shoot 'em ups as it does for, say, fighting games, and Gungriffon is an excellent addition to the ranks. If you're after high-speed thrills you might be better off with Panzer Zwei, simply because your mech is slightly cantankerous and not as fluid moving. However, if you're just in it for the explosions, Gungriffon is certainly worth your money.

RAD





Given the rise of crime rates in inner cities, Santa has had to update his delivery methods, as seen here in Lapland.





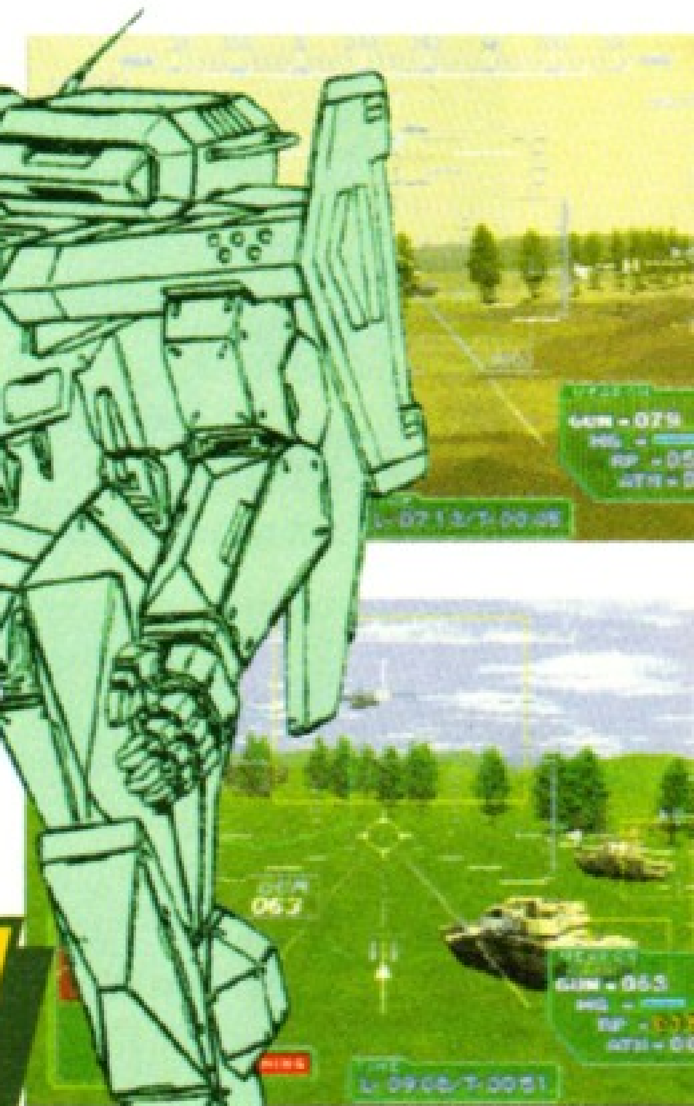




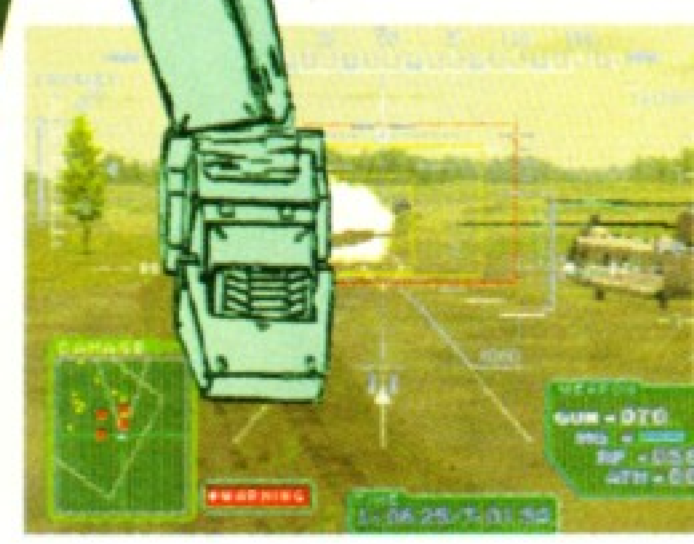






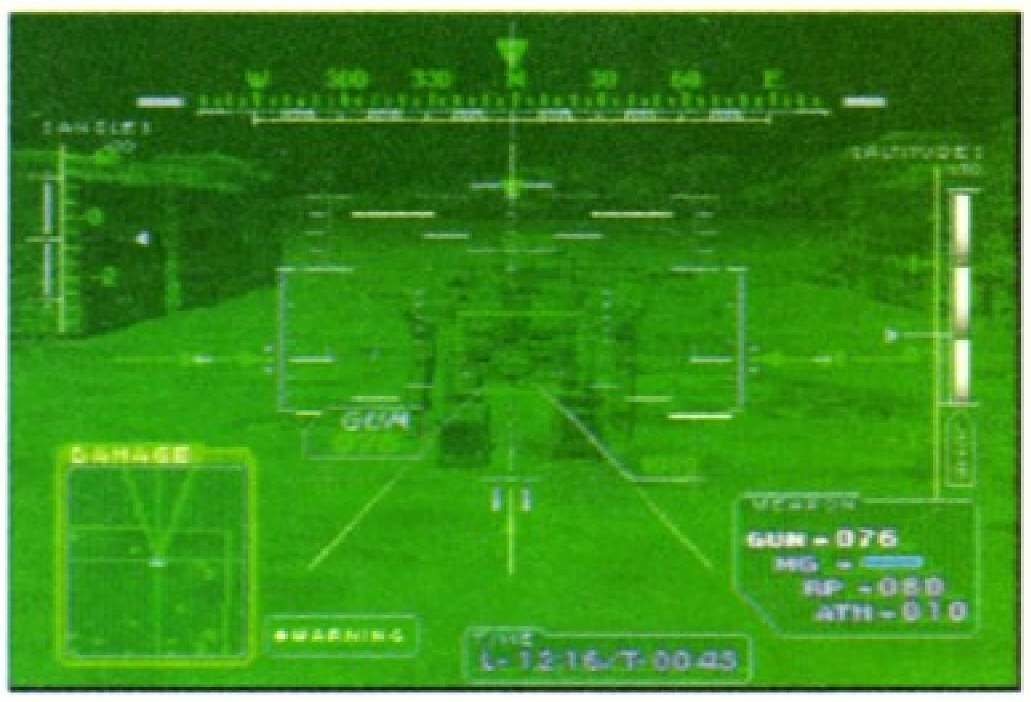


GUNGRIFFON









These shots come from the Japanese version of the game, hence the Japanese text. The English version will has English text. So there.

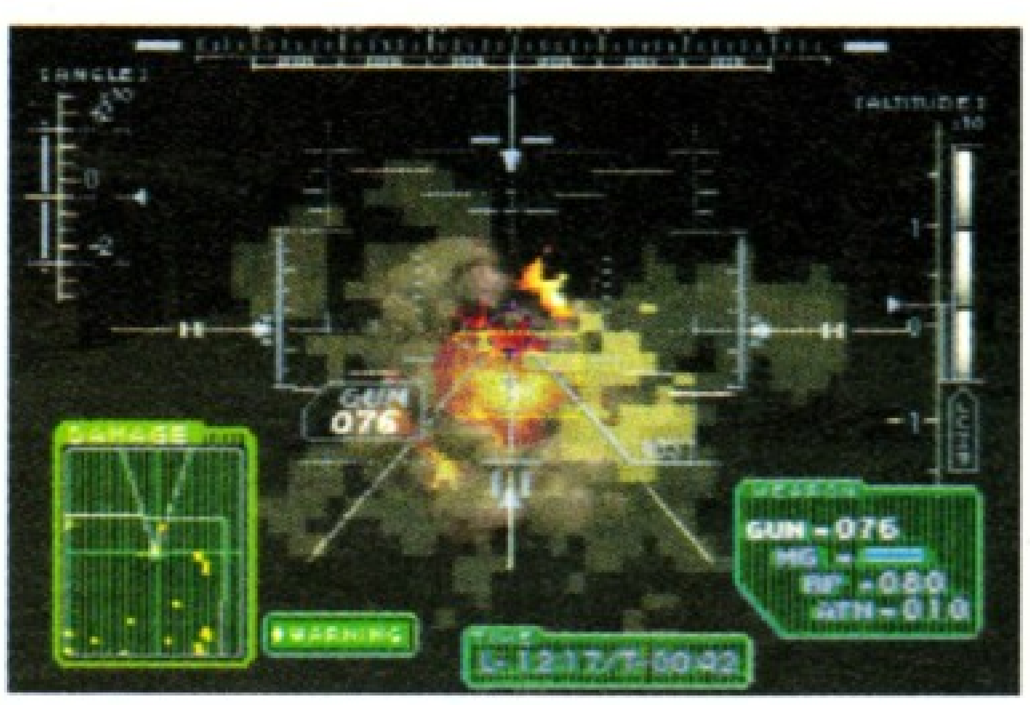


MY LITTLE ROBOT

Wielding a war robot isn't quite the piece of cake you might envisage it to be. There's all sorts of things to take into consideration other than killing. Jumping, looking, turning, swivelling your gun turret – all these things are integral parts of the Gungriffon experience. There's also a tactical positioning element to think of (so you don't get blown up in ten seconds). Ergo Gungriffon isn't as fast moving as Panzer Dragoon, but there's a lot more play depth. Which means you have even me things to think about in the midst of combat. Hooray!









Above is one of your friendly friend units – and he's under attack. Blast the enemies firing at him before he's destroyed, or you'll lose his covering fire.



One of the best giant robot games ever, and an awesome shoot 'em up in its own right, Gungriffon deserves investigation by all bang-loving Saturn owners.

graphics	90
sound	87
playability	88
lastability	91

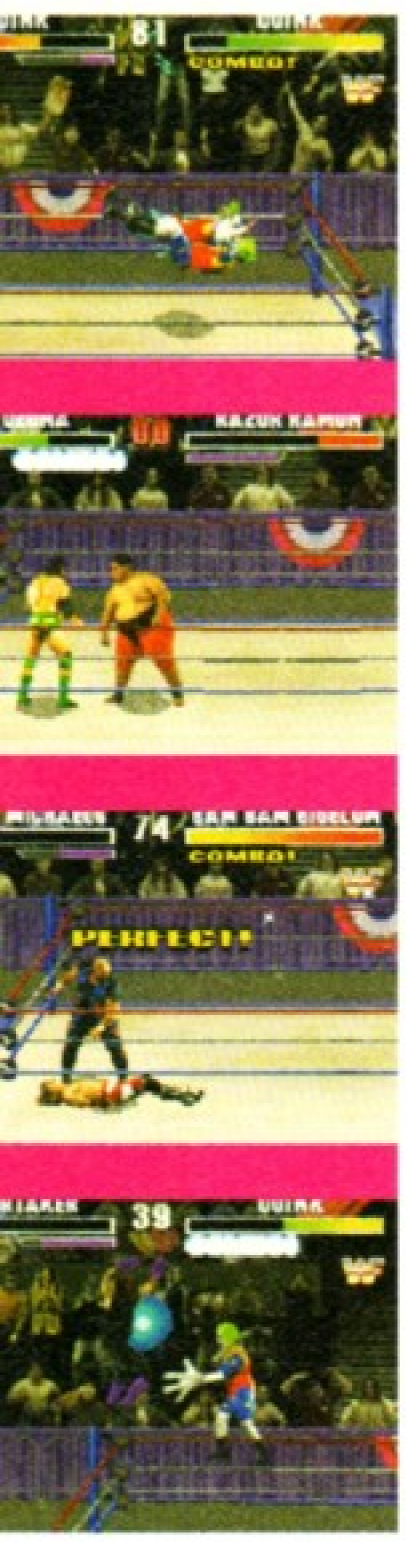
overall **88%**

BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£39.99
STYLE	SPORTS SIMULATION
RELEASE	OUT NOW

After several months spent bouncing off the ropes, WWF Wrestlemania has finally made it to the Saturn, just in time for a summer slam. Was it worth the wait? With eight larger than life characters, tonnes of crazy moves to try out, and loads of mad combo's, we reckon so.

Wrestling has to be one of the most depressing things to find yourself watching. It's the kind of desperately bored viewing that makes you ask yourself angst ridden questions like 'what am I doing with my life?', 'surely there's more to it than this!?' and 'why did I ever bother getting Sky in the first place?' It's often been the way with the accompanying wrestling games as well.

It was with such anguish that I first took WWF Wrestlemania from its case, sighing defeatedly as I close the lid, waiting despondently for the title screen, an air of resignation already lingering about the console ...but hold on here! What's this? I seem to be enjoying myself, I'm actually finding some of this amusing! It must mean one of two things; either I've somehow mutated into the high priest of spodniks or this is actually quite good. To my relief it's the later.



The reason WWF Wrestlemania succeeds where so many others have failed is all to do with its immediate accessibility. After about five minutes you'll find yourself able to perform some of the most outrageous moves; there's Doink drawing a mallet from his jacket, The Undertaker unleashing a pack of wolves, Yokozuma demonstrating a diving bellyflop from the ropes and loads of other over-the-top stuff going on. Ok, so this isn't what you'd normally see in WWF but then who want's to see conservative elbows and mundane knees to the back when you can have a real circus extravaganza. That's not to say you can't do the boring moves as well. WWF Wrestlemania has so many moves that you'll constantly be discovering new ones. Another fear that normally pops up as soon as 'easy to get into' is mentioned is that the game is a bit too shallow. Well rest assured that this isn't the case with WWF Wrestlemania, because while it is easy for beginners to be bashing away happy as scallywags, if you want to become a bit of a master you'll have to start mastering the huge range of combos available, some of which involve over 25 continual hits! Combo's are activated when you have some power in your combo bar which sits just below your energy bar and these are damn funny to watch.



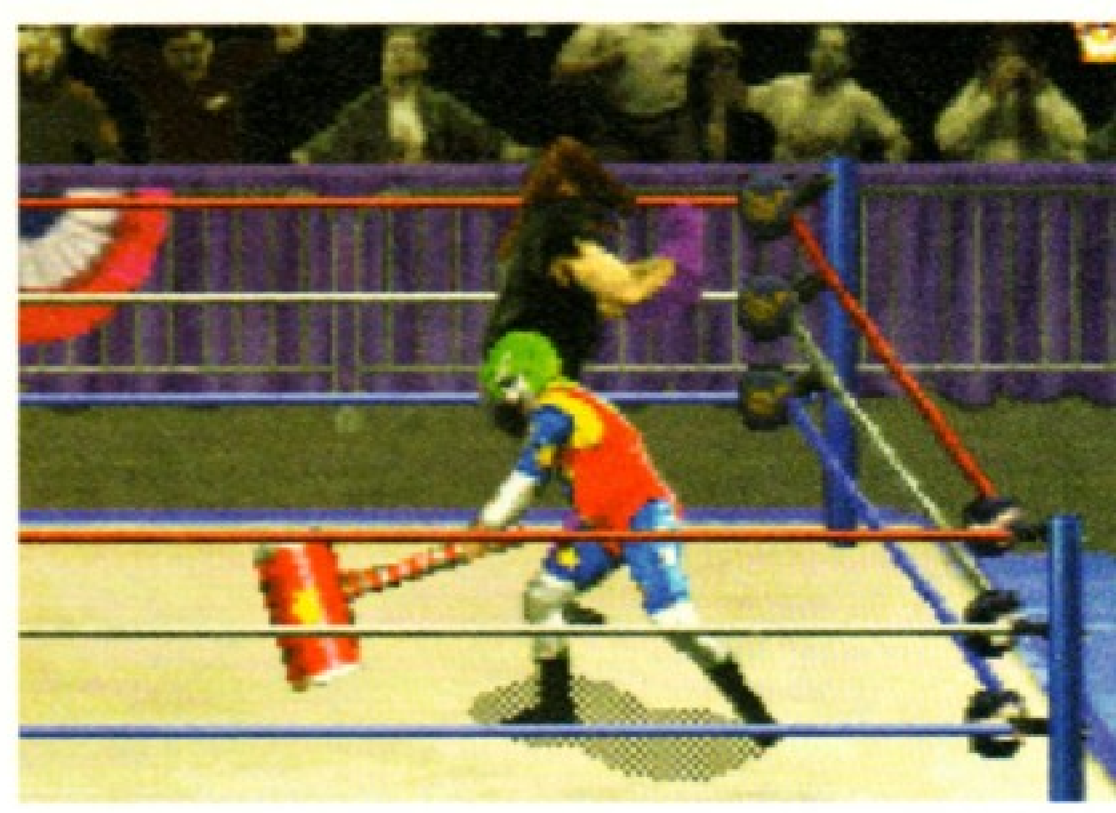


Graphically WWF Wrestlemania doesn't match the gameplay, but while it's all 2D the sprites are nevertheless nicely drawn and animated and there's always plenty of movement in the ring (or out of it), especially when you get four wrestlers fighting a huge brawl at once. As you'd expect, this is a much more satisfying game to play in two-player mode, partly because the tournament is a tad too easy and partly because gloating over a live opponent is more fun.



It's true that maybe WWF Wrestlemania could have done with a few more characters, something that would enhance its longevity as well as its playability, but who knows, maybe there'll be more in a sequel. Yes another WWF game! Previously that might have sounded like a death knell, but if they maintain and improve on the standard of WWF Wrestlemania it might well be something to feel a bit cheerful about.

ROB





Yokozuma demonstrates the benefits of being incredibly fat. When he pins an opponent down he simply sits on them!















WWF Wrestlemania







Above - the Undertaker and Yokozuma take care of Bret Hart in a two-on-one battle. You can also play two-on-two.

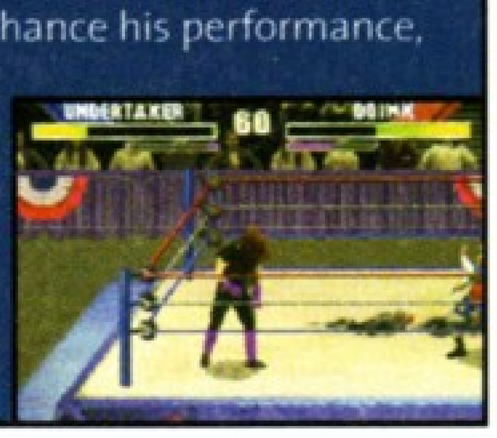


WWF gives you the chance to get into some classic wrestling lark by climbing the ropes and then jumping in on an opponent. Each character has their own particular style of jump.



HEY! THAT'S FUNNY!

The far fetched nature of many of the moves in WWF Wrestlemania gives the game a more circus/ carnival atmosphere. Doink for example uses a huge clown boot and mallet to do in his wrestling with opponents. The Undertaker ushers packs of wolves from under his huge cloak, Yokozuma uses a wobble belly attack and Shaun Michaels makes use of a baseball bat to enhance his performance, and Razor, rather obviously, makes use of a huge blade to slash opponents. It might not be wrestling but it sure is fun!





Forget the 3D beat 'em ups for a little while. WWF Wrestlemania is proof that you can still get a lot of great playability out of the traditional 2D title. And it's pretty darn funny too!

graphics	80
sound	82
playability	87
lastability	84

overall **86%**

BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	SPORTS SIMULATION
RELEASE	JUNE 1996

A great football team? The defence is solid, the midfield inspirational, and the strikers deadly. But is Striker '96 deadly. Hmmm, it shows moments of promise but in front of goal it loses its nerve.





Striker gives you the chance to play indoors which means no fouls and continual play.



It's a South American derby in effect! The mighty Argentinians take on Bolivia.



By now you probably can't close your eyes without seeing footballs darting in all directions. Your ears are no doubt deafened by the monotony of post-match catchphrases like "well, we knew we were in for a tough match but the lads pulled through" and "yea, well, I saw it coming, managed to get a touch and luckily it went in". And while football might be a game of two halves, you can't forget the possibility of extra-time. So here it is in the shape of Acclaim's Striker '96, the latest in the ever-growing range of football sims available on the Saturn.



You'd be justified in thinking this one's missed the boat as far as Euro '96 is concerned. What's unfortunate is that it's only the first of many misses. If Euro '96 is the majestic Newcastle, FIFA '96 the solid Man U., Striker '96 is the mid-table banality of Leeds.



Recognise these players? Of course not, they're made up.



In terms of the scope of the game there's little to complain about. It's got 38 international sides, including the more obscure footballing nations like Australia and New Zealand, all of the expected options (formation, strategy etc.), plenty of stats for the more specky fans, and a wide choice of tournaments from the one-off friendly to Euro '96 itself with all sixteen teams — although it should be noted that all of the players in Striker '96 are fictional. Like its predecessors, Striker '96 features a range of camera angles to suit your viewing desires and it's even got a five-a-side option which is something that neither Euro '96 or FIFA '96 can boast. But, to use a cliche almost as worn as footballing speak, all this means nothing if the gameplay isn't up to scratch. And in Striker '96 it isn't. For starters the actions moves too fast, and although that is something that appeals to some, I'm a bit of a stickler for realism in a footy game, and subsequently I found it frustrating. It also meant that when the computer played as a great team like Italy, Germany or Brazil, the passing had an almost supernatural quality, players moving the ball about with a telepathic accuracy that seemed a bit ridiculous at first. Admittedly, after getting used to the game style this didn't seem quite as bad and as my technique improved I managed to stave off their knack of scoring a goal every ten seconds. Another departure from soccer realism came with the behaviour of the ball itself. It moves like one of those 99p efforts you can buy at the newsagents and that float away as soon as there's a gust of wind. Some of the after-touch swerve made banana shots look like cucumber shots in comparison, practically bending through 90°.

Graphically Striker '96 falls short as well. The sprites are small and as a result you don't get to gasp at the kind of flare players show in Euro '96. Instead they all jitter about at amazing pace like 22 over-active school kids. What really sealed it for me though was the commentary. Both Euro '96 and FIFA '96 employ the talents of BBC's finest, but Striker '96 opted for Andy Gray, Sky's venerated windbag. Ok, so maybe this is simply personal taste, and you might even say the same for the style of play that Striker '96 adopts; fast in the sense of the old arcade footy games. Maybe, but that doesn't stop it from being often more irritating than fun to play, and, when it comes to choosing between what's on the market, who would you go for — Newcastle or Leeds?

ROB





REVIEW






STRIKER '96






Striker '96 features an option that lets you play in the Euro '96 competition with all the groups properly set up and everything. Of course, you won't know the players from Adam.



INDOORS – YOU KNOW THE SCORES!

Striker '96 features an option which is entirely its own; the chance to play indoors in five-a-side games. You can still play all the tournaments indoors, accepting of course that your team has now been halved. The indoor game feels even faster than normal, and it's made more hectic, partly because the ball never goes out of play and partly because in the indoor mode there are no fouls at all meaning play never stops!











Hey look! It's the overhead view!



A very average football game which, when faced with the likes of Euro '96, looks tired and a bit dated. Put it on the subs bench.

graphics	70
sound	72
playability	75
lastability	77
overall	75%

BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SPORTS SIMULATION
RELEASE	JUNE 1996

It's another sport invented in Britain which we're famously bad at! It's tennis! And now it's here for your Saturn, you lucky lucky dogs. Play!

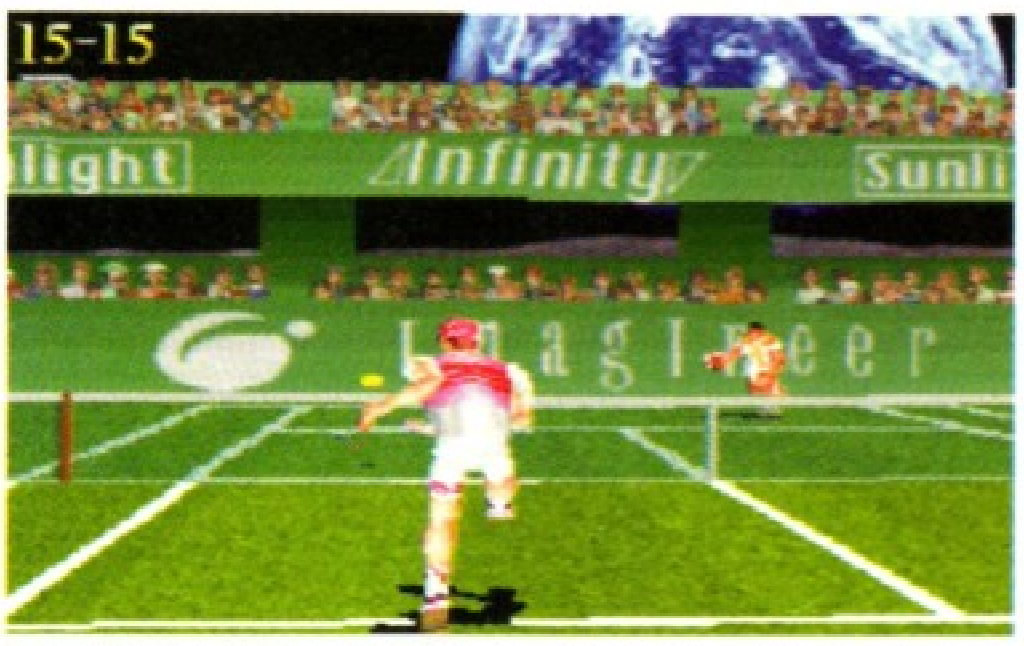


Many people believe there's a link between a child's upbringing and the career they choose to enter in later life. Doctors tend to run in the family, and kids who grow up in liberal hippy environments often turn out as artists, actors or rebel accountants. The programmer of Virtual Open must have had great admiration for his parents, who no doubt ran a home for alcoholic horses. So much so that the shambling gallop of a drunken equestrian is replicated almost perfectly in this game – sadly it is in the movement of your player. Now some of you may not have seen an aled-up gee-gee in action, so allow us to describe the effect for you. The players in V Open shift around the court like their legs are on sideways, over-reacting to the slightest touch of the controls, not going where you want them to, or else going unstoppably too far in the right direction. Sometimes you'll think your luck is in and you've got your little bloke just where you want him, so you'll hit the fire button and watch as they collapse pathetically a mile away like a super-powered wino trying to escape an oncoming pushchair. This is a diving shot.

Perhaps needless to say, the pinpoint control pretty much essential to the success of a tennis simulation is a teeny bit on the absent side. This wouldn't matter quite so much if the collision detection on your racquet was a bit more predictable. Sometimes you'll ace a shot you're absolutely nowhere near, and others you'll have yourself positioned perfectly only for the ball to sail mystifyingly through your racquet. And it's not as if you can even work out the parameters of collision, because there's no feeling of connection when a shot strikes – you can't even really *see* whether you've hit or not until the ball is sailing across the other half of the court.

This isn't to say that Virtual Open doesn't have its good points or original features. There's an impressive selection of camera angles to view the action from (all of which are accessible at any point during the game). The quantity of possible shots is equally plentiful, with every little button upon your joypad coming into play, producing a dazzling array of tennis techniques to exploit, especially when combined with topspin, sidespin, jumping shots, the aforementioned diving shots and so on. There's also a clever bounce-o-meter, which predicts where the ball will bounce on court up to three times by use of different coloured markers on the floor. This seems a bit strange at first but actually proves quite useful. However, all this pleasant game deign frippery is wasted simply because of the cumbersome controls. It's a shame, because an effort was obviously made to give Virtual Open a realistic feel. Instead, the awkward over-complex animation slows everything down and spoils what could have been a decent title. Hopefully Imagineer and Acclaim will get their heads together and produce a Wimbledon Edition or something which will perform the same super-enhancing job as Victory Goal '96 did for its lamentable predecessor.

RAD

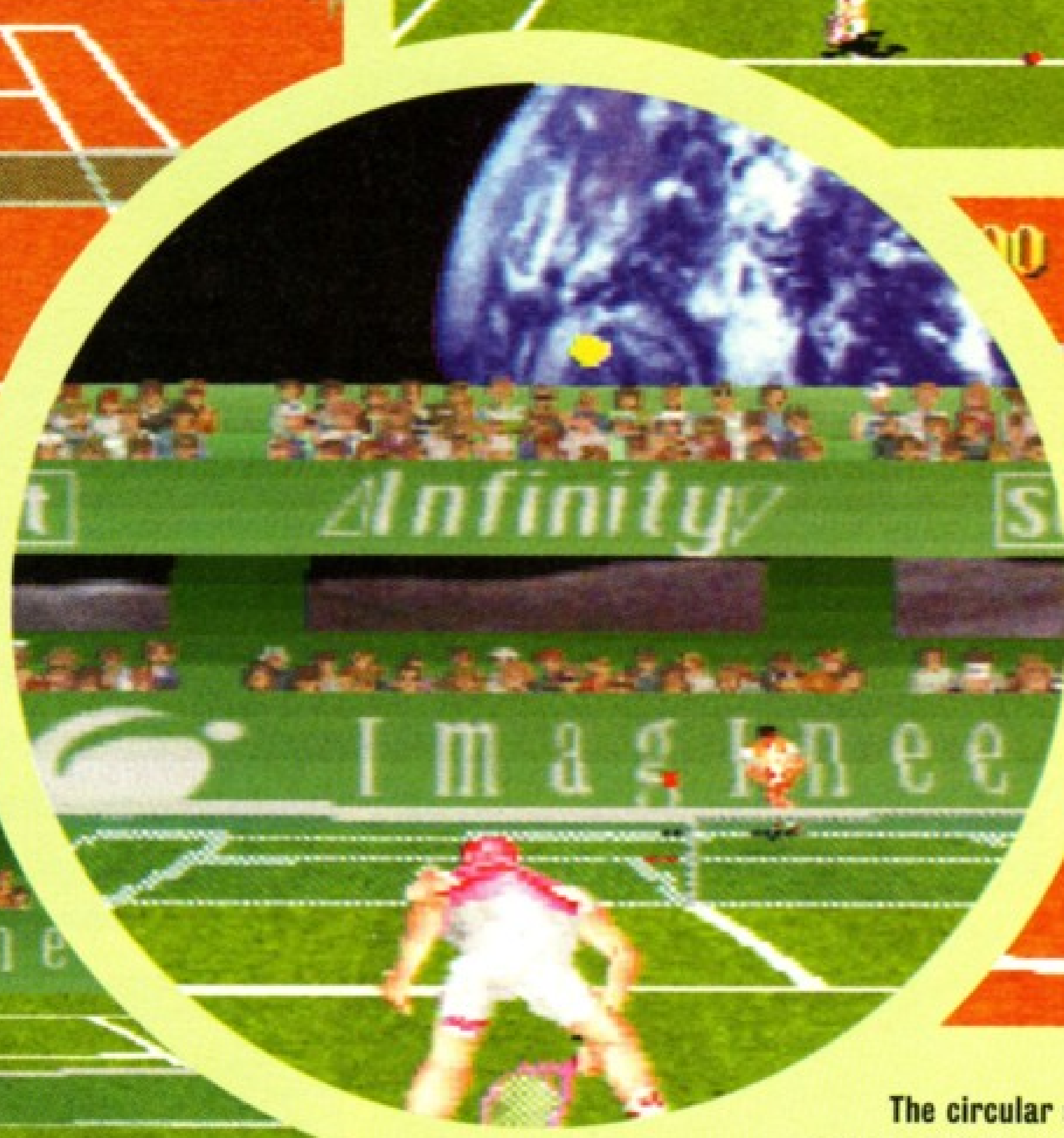


A one-legged tennis player, the result of an horrific genetic experimentation by The Olympic Council. Not really, it's just the standard caption we roll out when the perspective on a screen shot makes it look like someone's missing a limb.

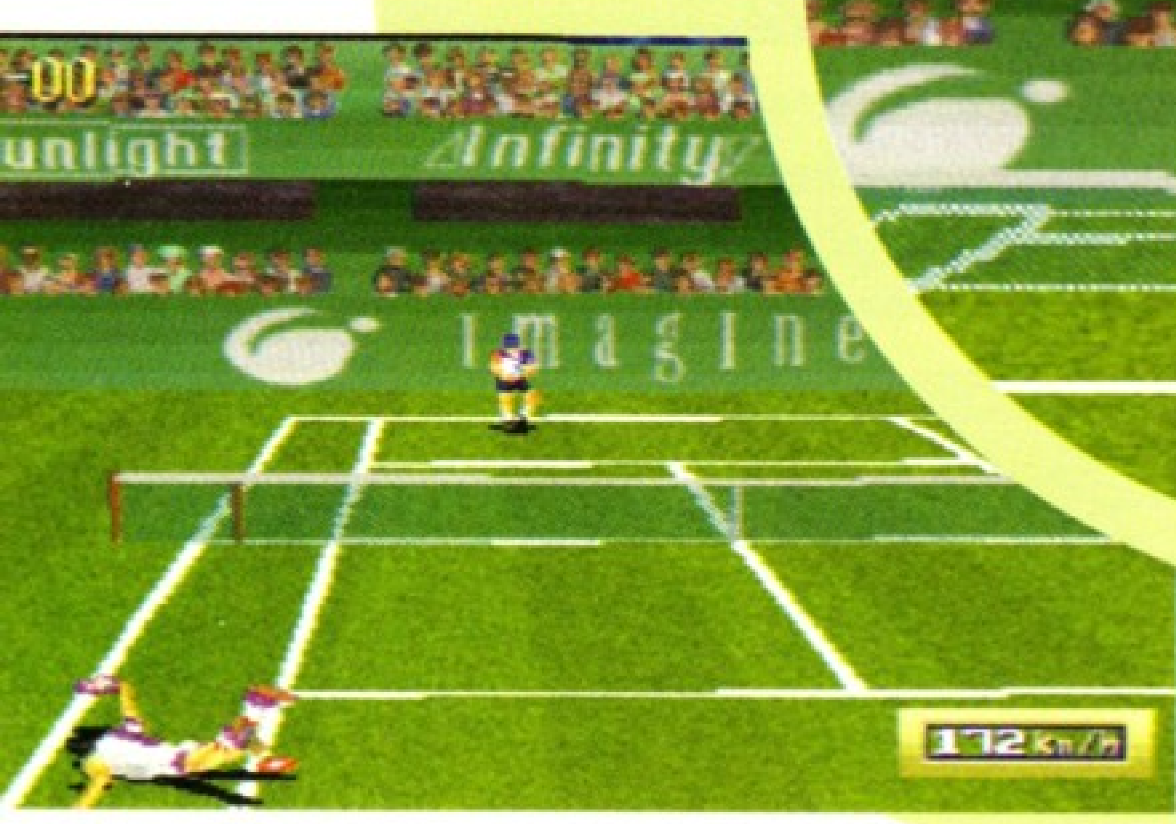






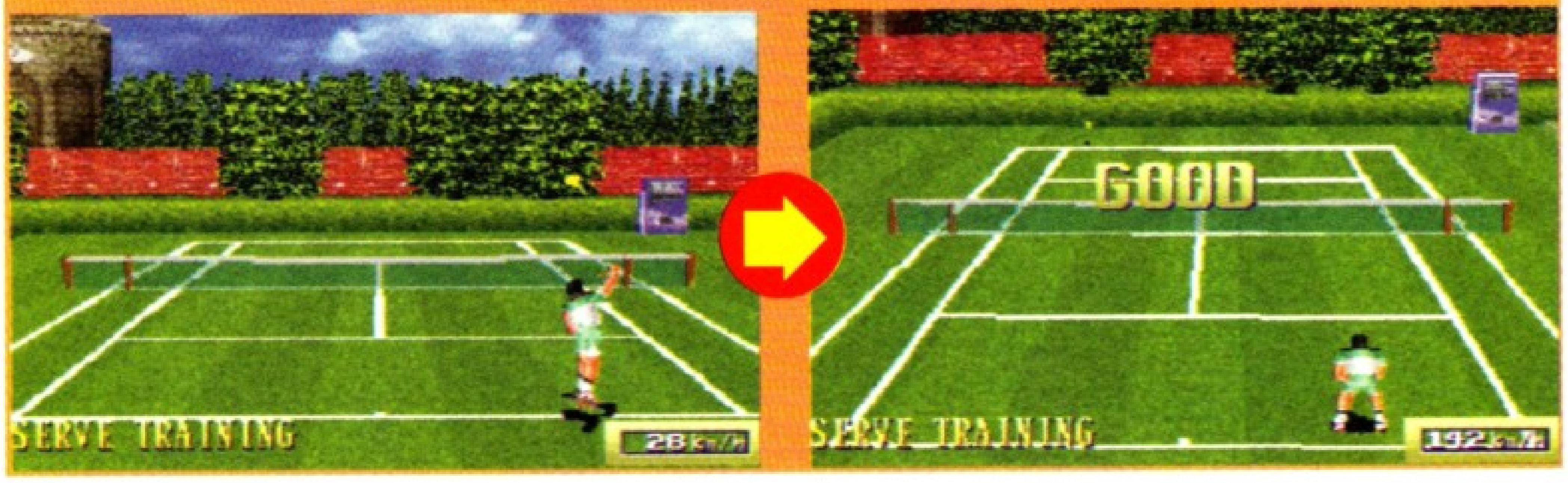






The circular shot above belies something unusual about Virtual Open – it's set on the moon, and planet Earth is clearly visible from the stadium. The gravity is, weirdly, unaffected by being in space. Good job too.





The training options come in useful to begin with. There's also a special serve training game where you're supposed to knock down a row of cans with your serves. It's quite tricky.

IT FELL TO EARTH I KNOW EXACTLY WHERE

Early tennis games asked players to gauge the position of the ball by latitude only, adding ball shadows when all this tricky 3D perspective thing started up. Since then there's been a revolution in ball-tracing technology, and Virtual Open adds to this legacy. Once the ball is in the air a red indicator marks where it's likely to hit the ground. If it's a low shot and will bounce more than once on-court, a blue marker indicates the projected second bounce. Unlikely third bounces are marked in green. So now you know.

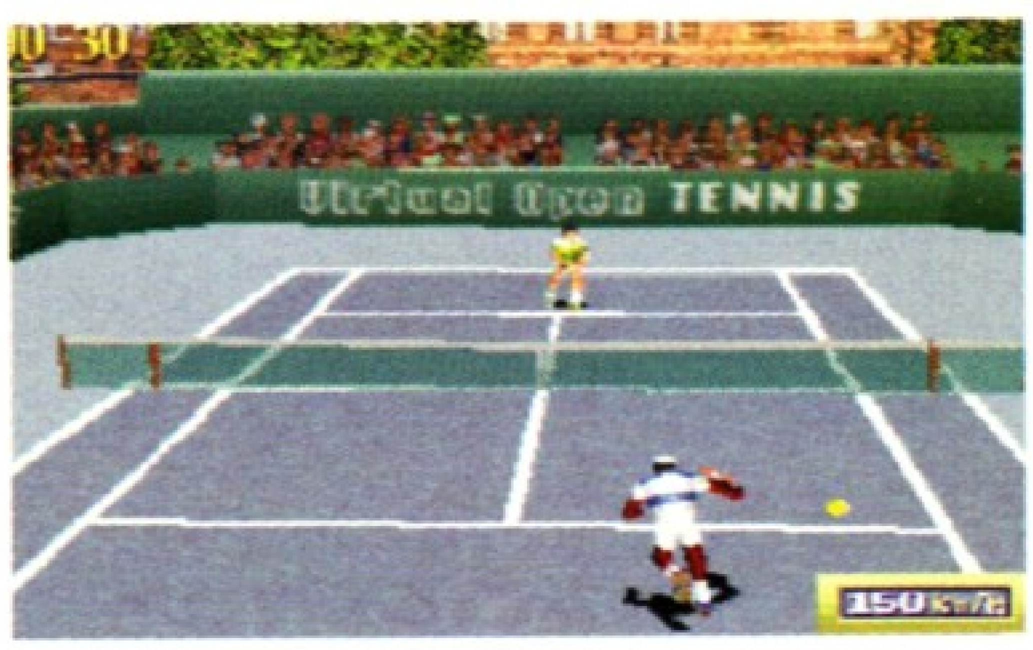


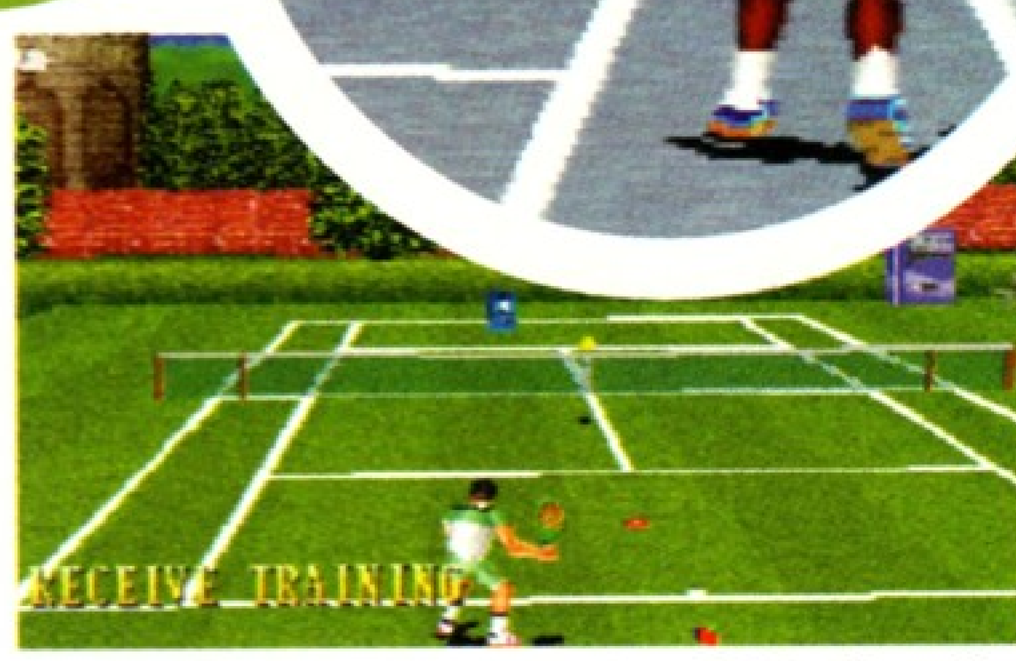


Virtual Open Tennis





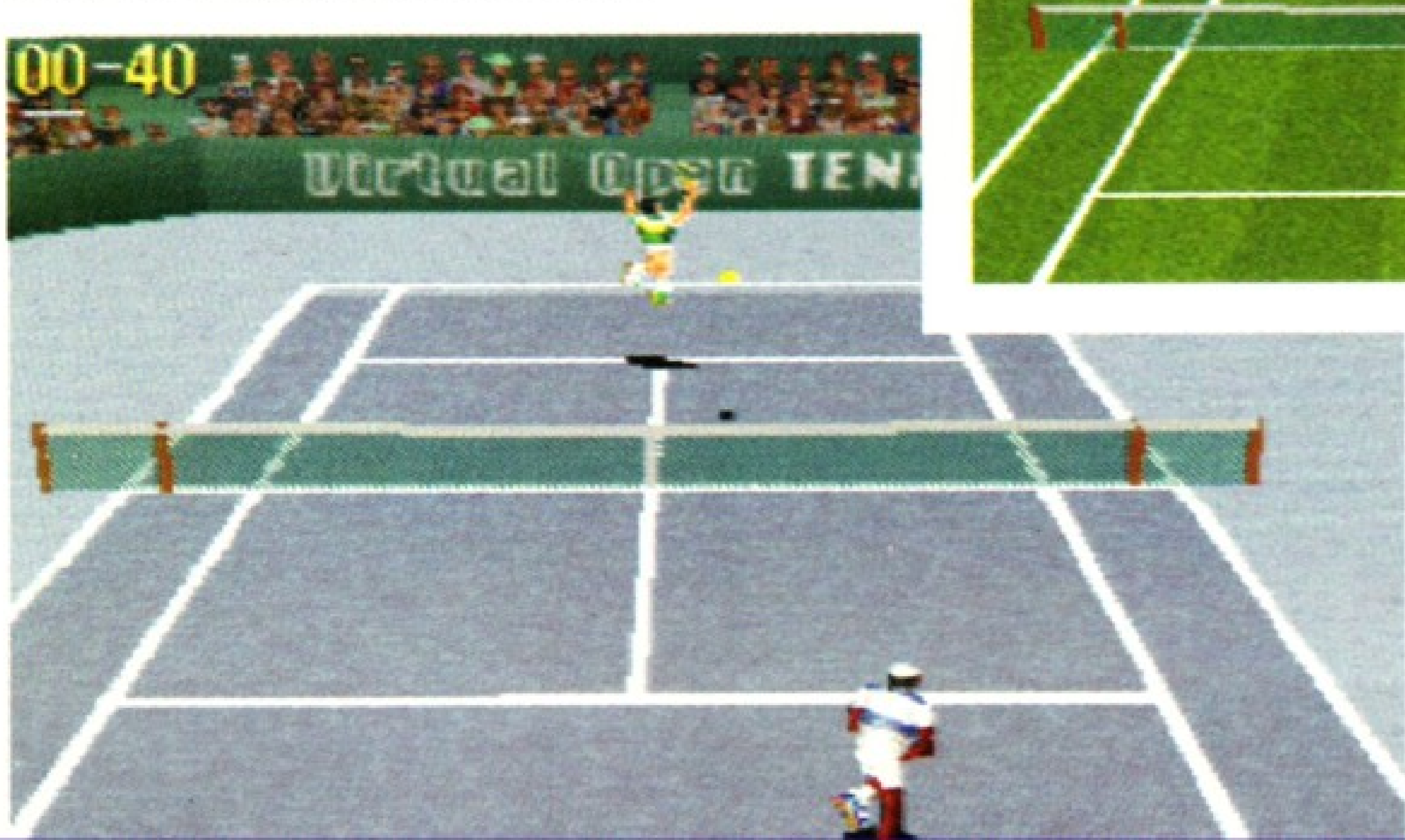




If you're a bit of a tennis hardnut, take on R2D2 in this exciting final! Actually, it a training section to help you get used to the controls. There's service, return and smash training options.

Virtual Open is crammed to the rafters with different kinds of tennis shot. It's just a pity the timing is a bit strange and the controls are so clunky. Still, it's not terrible.







Good design and a lot of innovations, but whilst I'd really like to like Virtual Open it's just too cumbersome for anyone but real hardcore enthusiasts.

graphics	78
sound	79
playability	72
lastability	66
overall	68%







BY	VIRGIN
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	AUGUST

Ghen War certainly has been a long time in coming. There were even moments when it looked like it wasn't going to make it at all. But thankfully Virgin got it together and here it is. And pretty good it is too.



All it took was a few jokes about the resemblance of the Ghen species to guppy fish and wham-mo! — an alien race that had been our chums after landing on Earth as refugees suddenly decided to declare war instead. That's the problem with aliens, no sense of humour. And anyway, they do look like fish. And while this explanation for the hostilities now existing between human and alien might seem a bit far fetched, it's also irrelevant. Why? Because Ghen War is about what all wars are about; loads of shooting, explosions, adventure and death!

Ghen War is viewed from a first person perspective, the player assuming the role of the crack-commando who's job it is to don a hypersuit and take to alien terrain in search of blood and glory. There are six stages in all, including the first stage which is actually simply a training course designed to familiarise players with the controls and the variety of weapons at their disposal. Each stage takes place on a different planet and involves completing a series of missions that see you destroying reactor refineries, invading a space port, sneaking about on Ghen spaceships and doing all of that classic war-dog kind of stuff. The weapons are pretty much standard fare; you've got your ever-present lasers which take care of foot soldiers, super-charged Neutron lasers for the tougher enemy sprites, things like grenades and mines which are good for causing structural damage (e.g. towers, bases etc.), and missiles (ordinary or tracking) which are designed to deal with just about anything.



That's right - in the future camera tripods are used as deadly weapons of war! And beware the Mr. Toastie!



Despite the fact that Ghen War uses all of the established tricks in the book, taking its influences from games like Doom and Descent, it nevertheless manages to provide a fair degree of entertainment. Because of the diversity of the mission objectives on each stage, Ghen War manages to avoid becoming too repetitive, and this coupled with the usual alien slaughter means you're unlikely to get bored too easily. There are some useful little additions like the map that charts exactly where you have been and where you haven't — something that enables you to avoid the frustration of going round in circles

But Ghen war does have its faults. To begin with the controls feel a bit clumsy and the movement a tad confusing. Rest assured though that once you've played it enough to get comfortable with what does what, progressing through the game is largely free of irritants. That is if you exclude the forever irritating FMV sequences that insist on popping up between stages featuring the usual dose of hammy Hollywood wannabes. Fortunately the options let you skip these excruciating sequences which I suggest you do. The graphics aren't exactly sensational either, the terrains looking quite similar to one another, lots of dull muddy colours, and the sprites move in a rather wooden fashion and I think the game could probably have done with more of them to liven things up a bit more. Some lovely burning sunsets though.

With Doom still looking like a faint prospect at the moment, a game like Ghen War makes for a pretty good filler in the meantime. The graphics won't have your jaw dropping and the gameplay won't keep your eyes pinned to the screen into the early hours, but Ghen War has just about enough in the way of thrills to make you a content little alien annihilator.

ROB





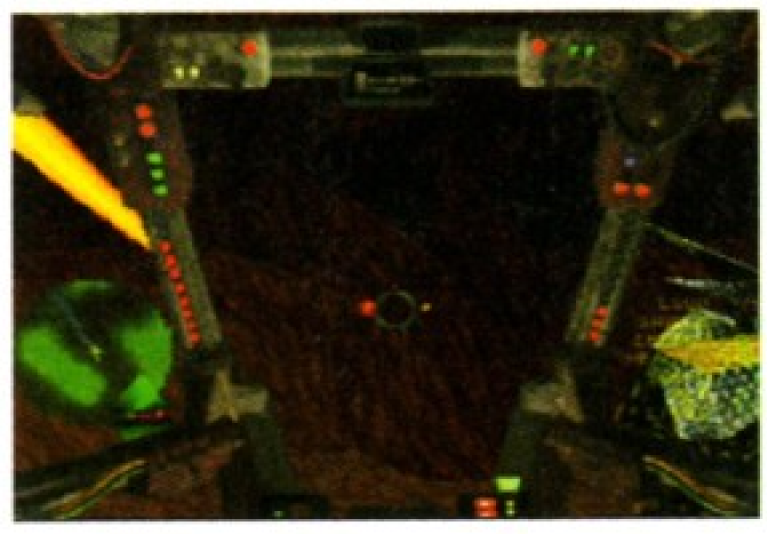
You'll have to make use of one of your missiles to destroy this.





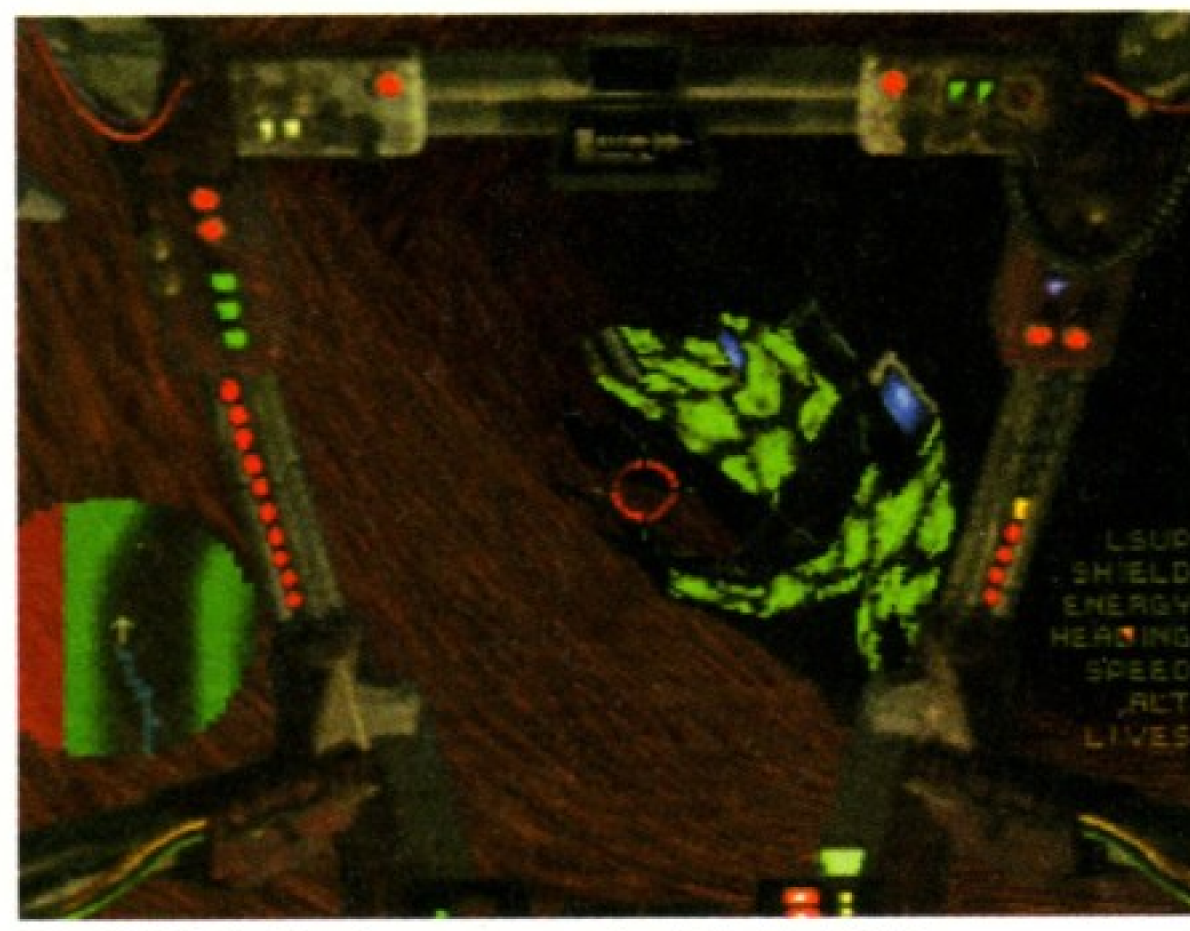


GHEN WAR









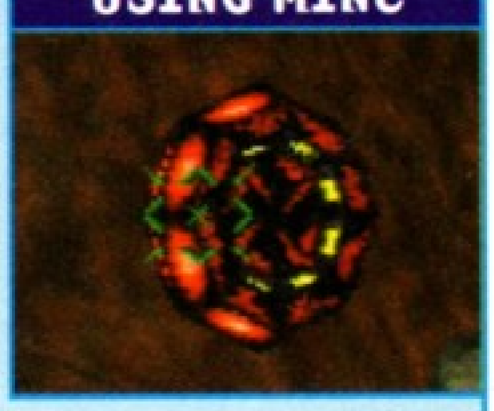
DIE FISHY TYPES!

Watching piscine-esque aliens explode is a wonderful pastime I'm sure you'll agree. However, in Ghen War it's not something you can do unless you've got a fine selection of weapons to do it with. For starters there's the standard laser which you have in inexhaustible supply. Collect the diamond shaped icon though and they become super-charged neutron lasers. Mines can be laid to destroy anything that comes within its proximity (excluding you of course). There are grenades which, with a nonchalant toss, will see your foes burst in bloody death, and finally there are the missiles. One kind locks on and tracks down enemies and the other requires your own targeting skills but is far more deadly, ideal for tougher opponents.

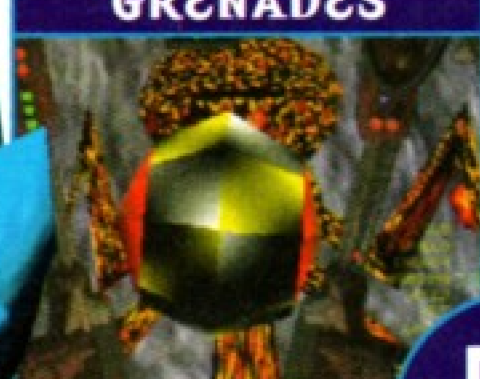
NEUTRON LASER



USING MINE



GRENADES

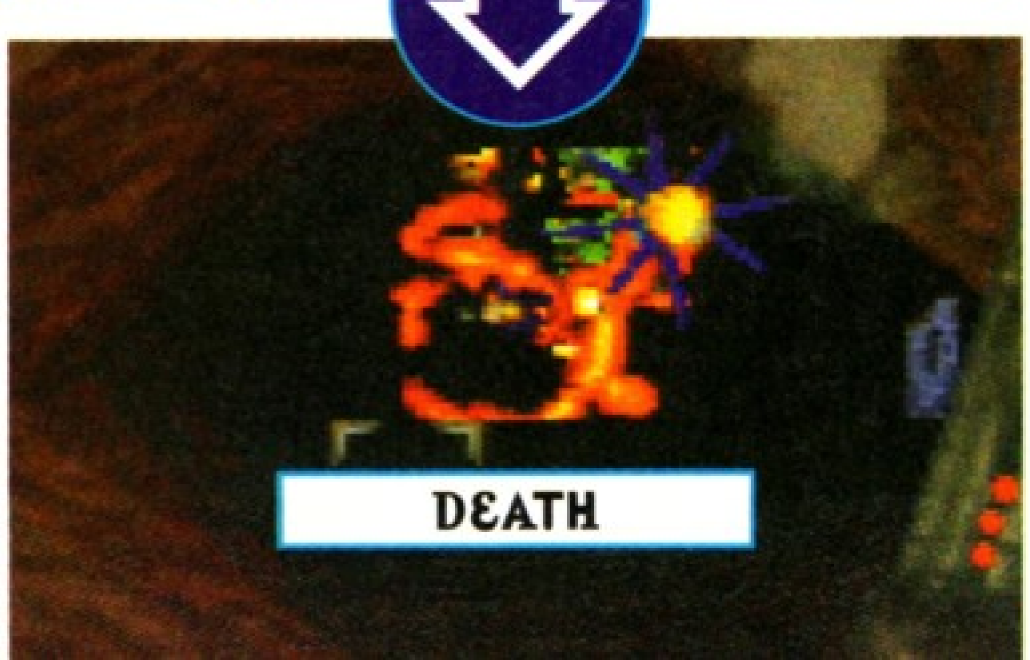


MISSILES





DEATH



Behold! It's the Ghen's very own version of the Ford Probe complete with a very fetching pea green camouflage.



Far from being innovating and lacking the kind of thrills that make a game a classic, Ghen war still manages to qualify as a fun shoot 'em up. Fans of Doom-style action might be silenced. For a while at least.

graphics	77
sound	80
playability	78
lastability	76

overall **78%**



NIGHT WARRIORS DARKSTALKERS' REVENGE

Undead heroes rise from beyond the grave to strike at your soul! Yes, indeedy, the software title formerly known as Vampire Hunter is about to infest Saturns throughout the nation, and in the third of his comprehensive moves specials, DAVID HODGSON swishes a ruffled cape about and descends into a bottomless pit to investigate exactly what the entire cast of this supernatural beat-fest have on offer in the combat zone. Dare you read further, dear reader? Only if you want the entire moves list at your disposal plus some handy cheats that make this release arguably the finest 2D Saturn beat 'em up ever seen...

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE NOTE: Remember that a few of these manoeuvres work only when your character is airborne, and others can also be used as a guard reversal (to counter strike an incoming enemy hit). Also note that some Channelled Attacks require your character to be powered up.



Demitri's massive fireball completely nukes a gibbering enemy, making them think twice before challenging the lord of the night to another undead confrontation!



DEMITRI MAXIMOFF VAMPIRE

The Count of terror is the easiest character to first muster, and as he bears a moves list not dissimilar to a certain gi clothed karate kid, it isn't difficult to fathom why. All your old Street Fighter moves seem to work well here, and although neither speedy nor cumbersome, Demitri excels in a variety of attacks. Try this lord of the undead before embarking on the more confusing characters.

SUMMONING POWERS

CHAOS FIRE	⇩, ⇘, ⇨ +any punch
DEMON CRADLE	⇨, ⇩, ⇘ +any punch
BAT SPIN	⇩, ⇙, ⇦ +any kick
FLYING SUPLEX	⇨, ⇘, ⇩, ⇙, ⇦, ⇖, ⇧, ⇗, ⇨ +any punch

CHANNELLED POWERS

MIDNIGHT PLEASURE	⇩, ⇨, ⇘ +two punches
DEMON BLAST	⇩, ⇨, ⇘ +two kicks



JON TALBAIN WEREWOLF

The lyncanthropic lunatic has many moves to dazzle the eye, and his speed should be used to the full when tackling a foe. Try his climb laser as the move may be repeated and varied in direction for a truly stunning light-show (and charred opponent), but Gallon's slightly puny physique makes him a Darkstalker to attempt hit and run opportunities rather than a wade in and hack strategy.

SUMMONING POWERS

STRAIGHT BEAST RUSH	⇩, ⇘, ⇨ +any punch
RISING BEAST RUSH	⇨, ⇩, ⇘ +any punch
AIR BEAST RUSH	Jump, ⇗, ⇨, ⇘ +any punch
WILD CIRCULAR	⇨, ⇘, ⇩, ⇙, ⇦ +any kick
CLIMB LASER	⇩, ⇧ +kick
MILLION FLICKER	⇦, ⇩, ⇙ +any punch

CHANNELLED POWERS

MIDNIGHT PLEASURE	⇩, ⇨, ⇘ +two punches
DEMON BLAST	⇩, ⇨, ⇘ +two kicks
MIRAGE BODY	⇦, ⇙, ⇩, ⇘, ⇨ +two kicks









LORD RAPTOR ZOMBIE

By far the most humorous character in the entire pack, Raptor (or Zabel in Japan) is definitely the joker of the pack, armed with a comprehensive array of stabbing hits and even the ability to turn an opponent into a small basketball and then slam dunk it through a net held by a giant fish (I kid you not). Quite nippy and good with the low hits, Raptor requires timing to turn him into a rotting killing machine.

SUMMONING POWERS

DEATH HURRICANE	⇩,⇙,⇦ +any kick
SKULL STING	⇩, ⇧ +any kick
HELL'S GATE	⇦,⇙,⇩,⇘,⇨ +any kick
SKULL PUNISH	⇨,⇘,⇩,⇙,⇦ +any punch

CHANNELLED POWERS

DEATH VOLTAGE	⇨,⇘,⇩,⇙,⇦ +two kicks
EVIL SCREAM	⇨,⇦ +two kicks
HELL DUNK	⇨,⇩,⇘ +two punches





Using some Blankatastic electrical currents, Victor shocks any opponent into submission!





VICTOR VON GERDENHEIM FRANKENSTEIN

Good lord, unless I'm very much mistaken, it appears to be Zangief with bolt attachments. Superficially at least, Victor is perfect for the unsophisticated Darkstalking player who relies on fear and brute strength (and of course some unrestrained mauling) to accomplish a job. His fantastic reach and thick hide are only let down by his slothfulness.

SUMMONING POWERS

GIGA HAMMER	Charge ⇩,⇨ +any punch
GIGA BUSTER	Charge ⇩,⇨ +any kick
GYRO CRUSH	⇩,⇙,⇦ +any punch
GIGA BURN	⇩,⇙,⇦ +any kick
MEGA SHOCK	⇩,⇘,⇨ +Medium or Fierce
MEGA SPIKE	⇨,⇘,⇩,⇙,⇦,⇖,⇧,⇗,⇨ +any punch

CHANNELLED POWERS

THUNDER BREAK	Charge ⇩, ⇧ +two punches
GREAT GELDENHEIM	⇦,⇙,⇩,⇘,⇨ +two punches







HSIEN -KO CHINESE GHOST

A newcomer to the world of the Vampire Hunter, this possessed girl can certainly hold her own in the combat zone thanks to her base attacks striking a foe many times, and an array of highly confusing moves, such as the weapon cannon where she throws a multitude of strange objects (such as bonsai trees, Capcom symbols and even an Akuma doll!). Very popular in Japan, Hsien-Ko (aka Lei-Lei) is another well-rounded character that is very good to start with.

SUMMONING POWERS

HIDDEN WEAPON CANNON	⇩,⇘,⇨ +any punch
WHIRLWIND DANCE	⇨,⇩,⇘ +P, tap Punch (air)
REVERSAL GONG	⇩,⇙,⇦ +any punch
HEAVEN RELEASE STRIKE	⇩,⇙,⇦ +any punch (close)

CHANNELLED POWERS

GROUND SPIRIT SWORDS	⇦,⇙,⇩,⇘,⇨ +two kicks
HEAVENLY THUNDER DESTRUCTION	Light Kick, Fierce Kick, Medium Punch, Medium Punch, ⇧





FELICIA CAT WOMAN

Once again the Street Fighter comparisons must be mentioned, as Felicia plays rather like Chun-Li, but with a few important differences. Quick nimble attacks are the order of the day with this nubile pussy, and watch for a particularly spectacular special attack if combos are your bag, as this frightening feline has the ability to score an amazing 34 hits with one Dancing Flash!

SUMMONING POWERS	
ROLLING BUCKLER	↓, ↘, → +any punch
DELTA KICK	←, ↓, ↙ +any kick
ROLLING SCRATCH	↓, ↙, ← +any punch, tap punch
SAND SPLASH	↓, ↘, → +any kick
HELL CAT:JUMP	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +any kick
CHANNELLED POWERS	
DANCING FLASH	→, ↓, ↘ +two punches
PLEASE HELP ME	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, → +two kicks









Morrigan may be a mild-mannered secretary by day, but at night she dons suspenders and becomes mistress of the night!



SHORYUKEN!!! Yep, this may feature strangely fanged creatures, but some of the basic moves nod a head (and a tentacle) to SF2...



MORRIGAN AENSLAND SUCCUBUS

Those thinking that Demitri was the Ryu of the piece should consider Morrigan to be distinctly Ken-like, as she imitates Mr Masters' Dragon Punch expertly, but has more moves than the crimson gi karate master. Easy to use, and with a Valkyrie Turn that'll inflict more damage than you thought possible (despite being difficult to connect), Morrigan remains a firm Saturn Mag favourite, not least because of her costume change cheat.

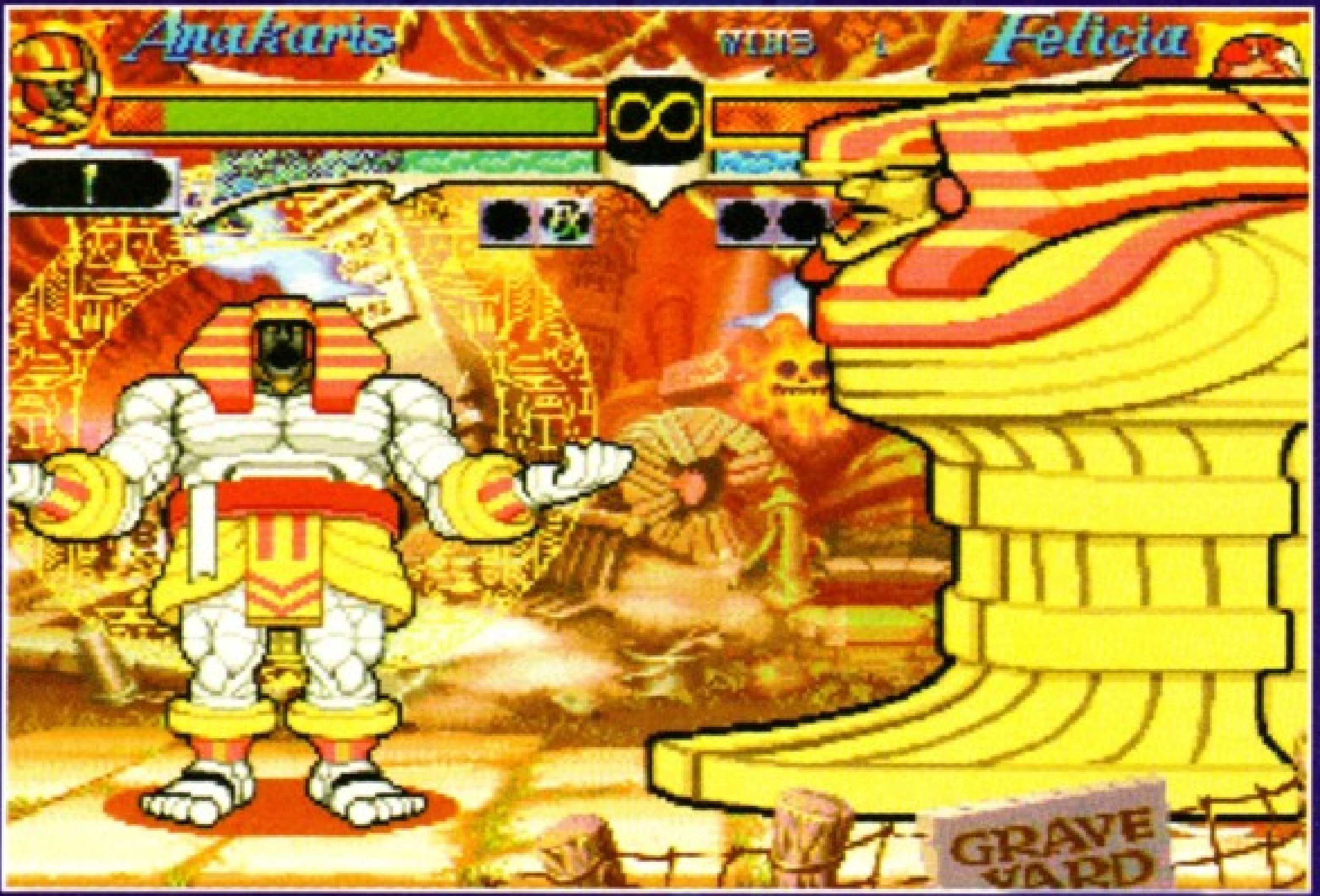
SUMMONING POWERS	
SOUL FIST	↓, ↘, → +any punch
AIR SOUL FIST	Jump, ↑, ↘, → +any punch
SHADOW BLADE	→, ↓, ↘ +any punch
VECTOR DRAIN	→, ↘, ↓, ↘, ← +any punch
CHANNELLED POWERS	
DARKNESS ILLUSION	Light Punch, Light Punch, →, Light Kick, Fierce Punch
ASTRAL VISION	Light Punch, Light Punch, →, Medium Punch, Fierce Punch
VALKYRIE TURN	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +any kick



ANARAKIS MUMMY

The largest character in the game is reserved for true Darkstalkers, as Anarakis is the most difficult to control fighter in the entire game (Dhalsim, anybody?). However, once you persevere with this Egyptian ruler, you'll find that his attacks are not only the most damaging, but the most spectacular you'll ever see. Sit back and watch the mummified remains of a once-powerful ruler quake with power, with the ability to even swallow an opponent's projectile attack and fire it back at them!

SUMMONING POWERS	
SPIRIT REFLECTION INHALE	↓, ↙, ← +any kick
SPIRIT REFLECTION EXHALE	↓, ↘, → +any punch (after inhale)
ROYAL JUDGMENT	↓, ↘, → +any punch
COBRA BLOW	←, → +any punch
SARCOPHAGUS DANCE	same strength punch and kick
MUMMY DROP	↓, ↘, → +any punch
CHANNELLED POWERS	
DARKNESS ILLUSION	Light Punch, Light Punch, →, Light Kick, Fierce Punch
ASTRAL VISION	Light Punch, Light Punch, →, Medium Punch, Fierce Punch
VALKYRIE TURN	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +any kick









Making waves on an advancing enemy, Rikuo's special has to be seen to be believed!



A rather special tongue-based attack leaves your opponent really rather sticky.



RIKUO MERMAN

Ruler of the water and rather like Gen-an (a player in SNK's seminal Samurai Shodown), as our aquatic monster has poison glands that secreet a knock-out poison that sends an opponent into deep slumber (useful for dissuading aerial attacks). Quick but with limited power, Rikuo (or Aulbath for those with an import copy of the game) comes into his own with some excellent specials.

SUMMONING POWERS

SONIC WAVE	↓, ↘, → +any punch
POISON BREATH	↓, ↘, → +any kick
SCREW JET	←, → +any punch
TRICK FISH	←, ← +Kick
CRYSTAL LANCER	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +any punch
SKY NEPTUNE	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +any kick
SPINNING CURRENT	→, →, Fierce

CHANNELLED POWERS

AQUA SPREAD	→, ↘, ↓ +two punches or two kicks
WATER JAIL	→, ↓, ↘ +two punches
SEA RAGE	→, ↙, ↓, ↘, → +two punches
DIRECT SCISSORS	↓, ↓ +two punches



BISHAMON SAMURAI

With an amazingly cute Japanese Akita yapping in the background stage, our man of honour and once proud samurai can coax an opponent into action and then finish them with a rather neat line in skewering katana attacks. His run-through attacks are very effective, and these strong and hard-hitting attacks make him a force to be reckoned with, no matter which opponent is facing you.

SUMMONING POWERS

SNAP SWORD	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, → +any punch (return press ← +any punch)
STORM WIND	↓, ↘, → +any punch after return
SEAL OF DEATH	Jump, ↑, ↗, → +any punch
RISING SLASH	→, ↓, ↘ +any punch (special guard reversal)
HIGH QUICK SLASH	Charge ←, → +any punch
LOW QUICK SLASH	Charge ←, → +any kick
KIRISUTE GOMEN	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ←, ↖, ↑, ↗, → +any punch

CHANNELLED POWERS

DEMON HEAD TWIST	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +two punches
DEMON HEAD GRAB	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +two punches (close)
MULTIPLE SLASH	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, → +two kicks

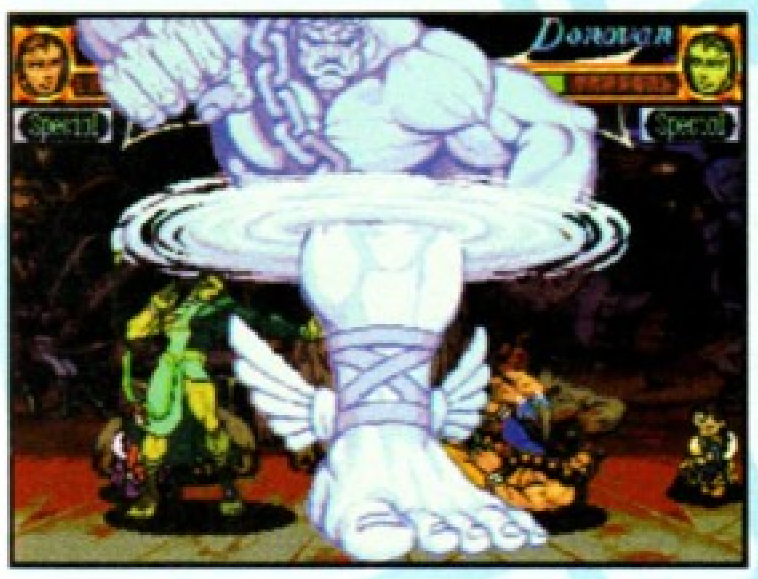


Bishamon has the ability to drag a struggling opponent towards him once his sword stab has connected. Time for a spot of splitching!



Upon executing old Bish's more gory take-down, you can experience brilliant flahes of gore! Take that, Yeti bonce!









DONOVAN BAINE DARK HUNTER

Arguably the most well-rounded of all the characters, and sporting more than his fair share of spectacular moves, the newest recruit to the world of Darkstalkers is yet another character that should be mastered instantly, only to be played again and again thanks to his excellent combat potential, such as his killer shredding attack and extremely weird Channelled powers.

SUMMONING POWERS

EFREET SWORD	→, ↓, ↘ any punch
BLIZZARD SWORD	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, → +any punch
LIGHTING SWORD	←, ↓, ↙ +any punch, tap any punch
KILSH RED PLANT	same strength punch and kick
KILSH RED SEND	Punch +Kick (after Plant)
KILSH RED AIR	Jump, Punch +Kick
SWORD GRAPPLE	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +any punch

CHANNELLED POWERS

PRESS OF DEATH	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, → +any kick
CHANGE IMMORTAL	Medium Punch, Light Punch, ←, Light Kick, Medium Kick





The amazing dancing Yeti, in mid jubilation after taking down Bishamon in a most impressive manner! The action doesn't stop there either, as Bishy then receives a killer whale's chomp!



SASQUATCH BIGFOOT

With some Mortal Kombat Sub-Zero effects, the Yeti gentleman with a penchant for wanton destruction has a throw attack that has to be seen to be believed, and some pretty natty projectile attacks to boot. With a Channelled power that cannot be blocked, this whale summoner and man-mountain should provide enough variation and humour for the most battle-weary player.

SUMMONING POWERS	
BIG SNOW	↓, ↘, → +any punch
BIG TYPHOON	→, ↓, ↘ +any kick
BIG TOWERS	↓, ↓ +any punch
BIG CYCLONE	↓, ↙, ← +any kick
BIG BRUNCH	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +any punch
BIG SWING	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ←, ↖, ↑, ↗, → +any kick
CHANNELLED POWERS	
BIG FREEZER	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, → +two punches
BIG EISBAHN	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, → +two kicks





HUITZIL KILLER MACHINE

One of the few original characters in the game (the X-men Sentinel was based on this robotic chap), Huitzil (aka Phobos) uses projectiles to great effect, and with good reason as he is rather cumbersome to play with. Learn to fry your opposition from a distance with this player, and watch for his muti-aiming optical beam. A tad slow, but an interesting fighter nevertheless.

SUMMONING POWERS	
PLASMA BEAM	↓, ↘, → +any punch
MIGHT LAUNCHER	↓, ↘, → +any kick
GENOCIDE VULCAN	←, ↓, ↙ +any punch
REFLECT WALL	←, ↓, ↙ +any punch
CIRCUIT SCRAPPER	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +any punch
FORCE FIELD	→, ↓, ↘ +any punch (guard reversal only)
CHANNELLED POWERS	
CONFUSIONER	→, ↓, ↘ +two kicks
FINAL GUARDIAN	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +two kicks


This ancient mechanoid is the product of a long-forgotten civilisation, but can still hold his hold in the combat arena.


Vviippp!!! Here our robotic chum manages to catch a past king of Egypt straight in the midriff with a freeze ray.



PYRON SPACE RULER

Both Huitzil and Pryon were bosses in the first Darkstalkers game, and Pryon remains equally as fun to play (and bears an uncanny resemblance to Dio from SNK's World Heroes games), but lacks the longevity due to no real combo potential. However, those wanting to control the most colourful Darkstalker should look no further than his towering monolith of light.

SUMMONING POWERS	
SOL SMASHER	↓, ↘, → +any punch
AIR SOL SMASHER	Jump, ↑, ↗, → +any punch
ZODIAC FIRE	→, ↓, ↘ +any punch
ORBITER BLAZE	Jump, ↓, ↙, ← +any kick
GALAXY TRIP	←, ↓, ↙ +punch or kick
PLANET BURNING	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ← +any punch
CHANNELLED POWERS	
COSMO DISRUPTION	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, → +two punches





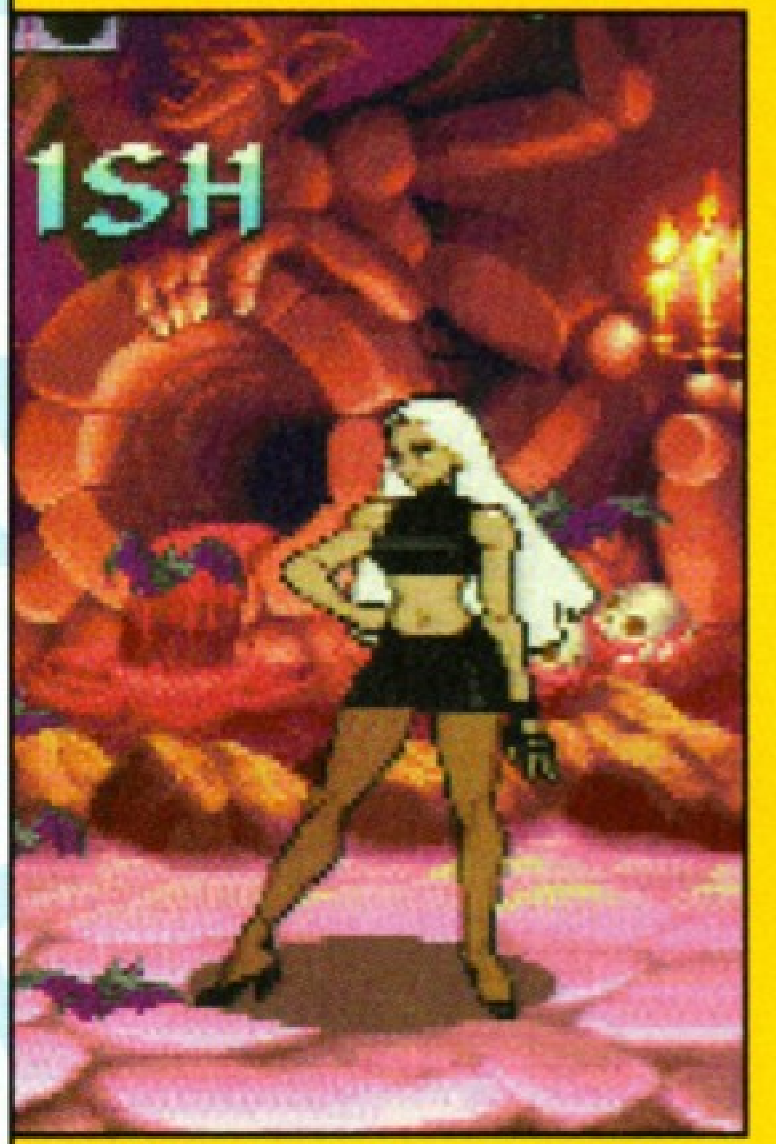
Not only is SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE content to detail all the moves of every character, but we've thrown in all the available cheats as well! The following cunning button pressings allow the players to increase the speed, tweak the character colours and even commence a spot of bloodletting against the original Darkstalkers backdrops! Are we good to you, or what! (Note that all cheats have been verified only on the Japanese version of the game).





MORRIGAN ENTERS CIVVY STREET!

Finally, the succubus can change into a different set of clothing instead of performing a victory stance. To achieve this, win your round of fighting and then press the left or right shoulder buttons, and Morrigan transforms into the 'undead about town', complete with mini-skirt and crop-top. Try holding all three kick buttons and a smarter outfit is avaialble. But are there any more...?



Shoulder buttons held down, and Morrigan teases out of her vamp costume. Well, hello!



Three kick buttons and you get Morrigan in attractive day wear. Mmmm, lovely.

ORIGINAL BACKDROPS... AND MORE!

To return to the original version of the game (or the game that your PlayStation-owning mates will be playing at a vastly sower speed with less frames of animation), try the following cheat that enables a secret options screen. From the main title screen, select options and from there highlight the configuration selection. Once highlighted, quickly press B, X, down, A and Y and you should hear a spot effect sound. Hey presto, a new 'appendix' screen is able to be accessed where you may change and tweak a variety of options, including the choosing of the uniform of your computer-controlled entities, as well as the original Darkstalkers backgrounds and music (and introduction!)









AN OUTFIT FOR EVERY OCCASION!

There are a total of eight colours for each of your characters, from the original hues of the first Darkstalkers game, to the excellent 'Gothic' costume hidden away in there (check out Felicia in this colour!). Once you've entered the character select screen, highlight your chosen one and then press X, Y, Z, A, B, C or Start for the seven usual characters. The secret colours are activated by pressing (and holding down) X and B together until the portrait changes to the new colour.













ENTER THE ARENA IN SUPER TURBO MODE!

Enter the options screen and highlight the turbo mode, before pressing X, X, forward, A and Z, and then hold down right to cycle through the extra turbo stars. After you've selected the speed that suits you best, you are whisked off for lightningly-quick confrontations with the enemy. Remember that the faster the game, the more difficult the Channelled Moves are to execute.

Tips







ULTIMATE MORTAL KOMBAT 3

Until now, we've been telling you that there are 22 playable characters in UMK3, but we now know that there are at least 23! The latest to be discovered is the original human version of Smoke. To access him, follow these instructions: Select regular Smoke as usual, then hold HP, HK, BK, R, and away from your opponent. Keep them held until the fight starts and you'll transform into the original Smoke! His moves are very similar to Scorpion's:

KEY					
⇧	UP	⇦	BACKWARDS	BK	BLOCK
⇩	DOWN	HP	HIGH PUNCH	R	RUN
⇨	FORWARDS	LP	LOW PUNCH	HK	HIGH KICK

OLD SMOKE	
HARPOON	⇦, ⇦, LP
TELEPORT PUNCH	⇩, ⇦, HP
AIR THROW	BK in mid-air
FATALITIES	
DECAPITATION FATALITY	R, BK, R, R, HK
FRIENDSHIP	Unknown
BABALITY	⇩, ⇦, ⇦, ⇨, HP
ANIMALITY	Unknown
PIT FATALITY	Hold BK + press ⇨, ⇧, ⇧, LP





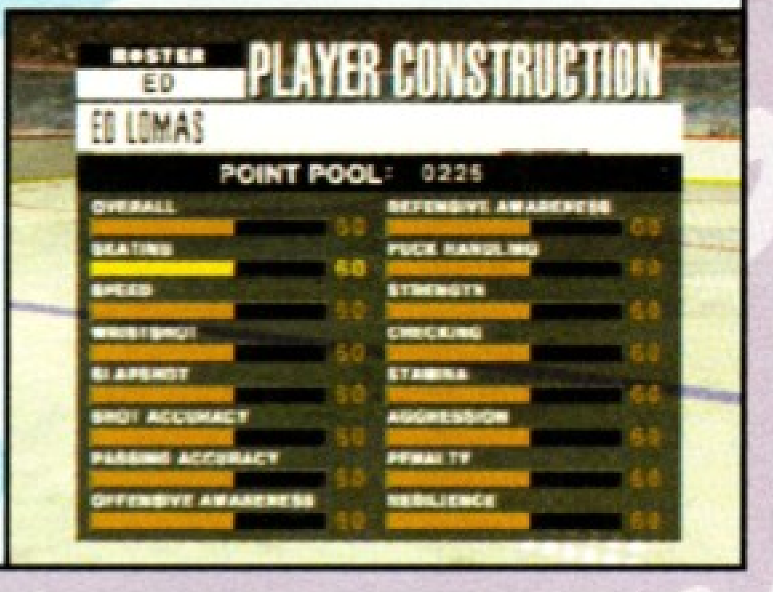
NHL ALL-STAR HOCKEY

To power any of the players up to the absolute maximum, go to the Player Attributes screen, hold A+B+C+X+Y+Z and tap Up. This will let you boost every area to the top. To get loads of hidden game modes, select a two-player game and press the X+Y+Z+L+R buttons during the player introductions. Then, when the National Anthem is playing, press:

L+R	Big Players
A+B	Mini Players
A+Y+Z	Upside-down Players
A+X	Puck slides to the centre
X+Y+R	Bouncy Puck







By performing the cheat on the screen to the right, your point pool will be increased, making it possible to create the perfect player!

NIGHT WARRIORS

If you can't manage to perform any of the Chain Combos during the game, this tip will help you learn. Start a fight and select Auto Guard mode. Now, when playing, press all three punches or all three kicks to perform a 3-hit Auto Chain Combo! To access the hidden "Screen Mode" option, first go to the options screen. Now hold the L and R buttons and repeatedly press Up then Down until the new option appears. You can now select either Saturn or Arcade screen modes.





There isn't much noticeable difference between the screen modes.

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

There's a hidden "Screen Mode" cheat in X-Men, as well as Night Warriors. To do it, just do the same as before: Go to the options screen, hold L and R and tap Up then Down repeatedly until the option appears.

If you think you're really good at the game, you can fight against an extra-hard CPU controlled Akuma. We don't know the exact way at the moment, but you'll get him if you do this: Play the game on level 8 difficulty and get at least 4 perfect victories in the final round. This will call Akuma to fight you just before Juggernaut.







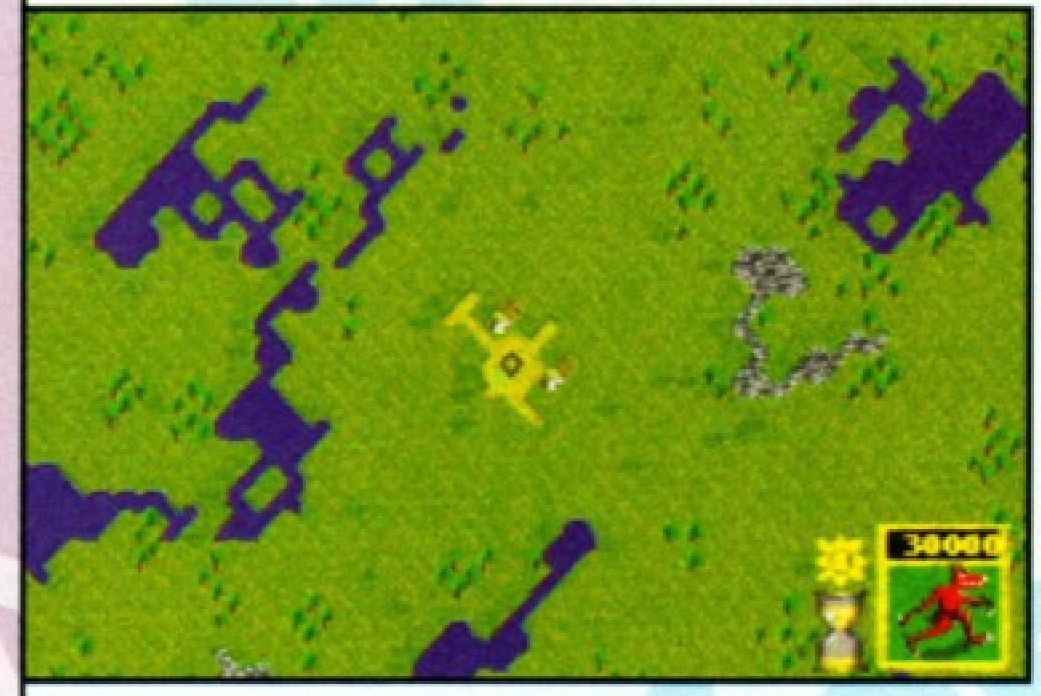
On this screen, hold L and R and keep tapping Up then Down until the new Screen Width option appears at the bottom (Left).



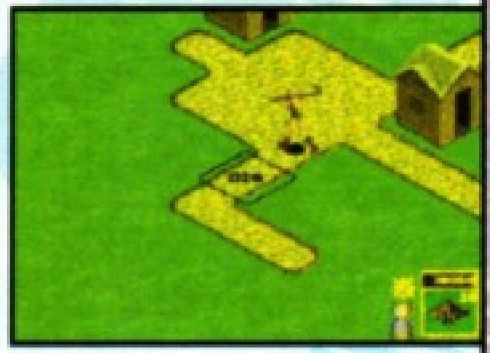
THE HORDE

Thanks to Graham Williams from Cornwall and Stephen Keys from Waltham Abbey for giving us these cheats. They should all be entered when the game is paused.

30, 000 Crowns	Left, A, A, B, Left, A, Right, Down
Show whole map	Left, A, Up, Down, B, A, A, B
Get all items and weapons	B, Right, A, Left, Left, Down, Right, A, A, Left
Speed up	B, Right, A, Down
Invincibility	B, Up, Right, Down, A, Down, A, Right
Play after village is destroyed	A, Down, Down, Right, A, Down
Level Skip	Down, A, Left, Left, Down, A, A, Right



Once you've given yourself loads of cash, use the other cheats to reveal the whole map and get all the items.



Just look at the bottom-right box – 30,000 crowns!



ARCADE TIPS

SEGA RALLY

Thanks very much to Nick Palmer from Cookham Rise, Nr. Maidenhead for finding these cheats for the arcade version of Sega Rally.

To access the Lakeside course in practice or multi-player mode, go to the track select screen. Now highlight the Mountain course, hold the brake pedal down and enter this sequence with the gearstick:

1st, neutral, 2nd, neutral, 3rd, neutral, 4th, neutral

You'll now be able to race on the Lakeside course!

To get the secret Hyper Car mode, you must be in a one-player championship mode. Go to the car select screen and hold the brake pedal down, then enter this sequence with the gearstick:

1st, neutral, 2nd, neutral, 3rd, neutral, 4th, neutral

The car will now move slightly faster than usual, as well as having slightly better grip!



The excellent Saturn cheats can now be performed in the arcades! Try racing on the Lakeside course in Hyper Cars – it's not as easy as you may think!

GAME OF THE MONTH

Guardian Heroes



BY	SEGA
PRICE	£44.99
RATING	★★★★★

We've been singing the praises of this title for about a hundred thousand millennia now, and we still think it's great – which is saying something after all this time. The secret of Guardian's appeal lies in the frenzied action coupled with sophisticated gameplay elements, including the three-plane playfield and special moves, not to mention the plethora of magical abilities and your zombie cohort. It's great fun, especially taking the multi-player options into account. And, of course, the fact you can choose your route through the game means it takes more than one completing to see everything Guardian Heroes has to offer.

It's hard to demonstrate quite how much there is going on at any one time in Guardian Heroes with screenshots – everything moves too quickly and so many enemies pile onto and off the screen in such a short space of time you can never capture the immediacy of a single level. However, we can tell you that Guardian Heroes is stuffed to the gills with things to kill and, thanks to a highly infectious storyline, gives you a very good reason for doing it too.

The cartoon-esque sprites, gorgeous animation and vivid use of colour make it almost (but not quite) as enjoyable to watch as it is to play, and it's basically just one of the best games you'll find on the Saturn so far. Easlily Game of the Month and no mistake, guv'nor.





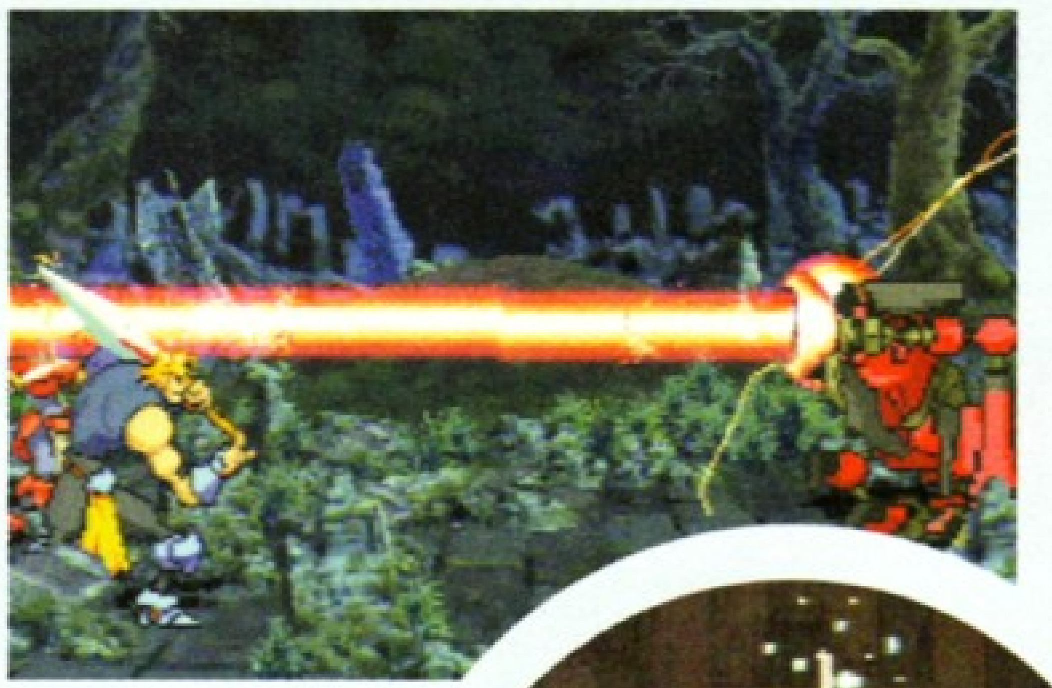








Swords, knights, robots, magic woods - basically, GH's got it all and no mistake!











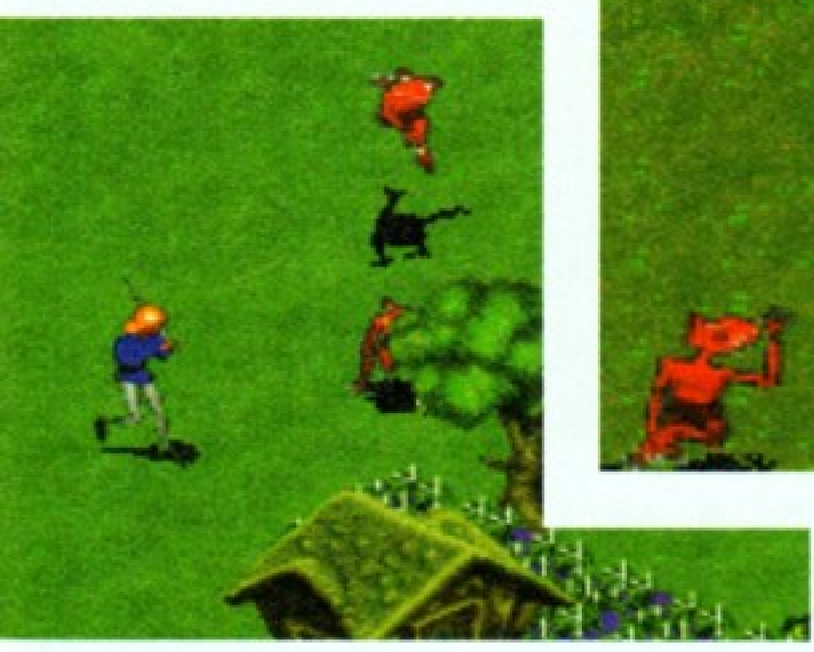


OUT NOW

THE HORDE

BY	BMG
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★★★☆

Hey! Strategy games needent be boring - here's The Horde!





You were wondering where mad cow disease comes from? Hmm, ask the short red guy.

Another comedy-focused game hits the shelves this month and like Discworld it takes a Monty-Python slant on life, which kind of explains why the main thread of the game involves nurturing a cow and a square of grass. You get exactly four years to make something of the plot of land and the overall aim is to generate a happy, bustling affluent community. It's sort of like Sim City except that there's little beasties that try to attack you all the time instead of things like volcanoes or earthqaukes happening. Each strain of horde has a different ability and as the game progresses they become incredibly hard and attack you at more frequent intervals. Naturally, your defences become much more resilient after a while and you can even employ your pet dragon to give you a hand in the latter stages of the game.

While this won't convert anyone who didn't' already like these kinds of games in the first place, it is a clever slant on the Sim City style play and it's one that works too. If you fancy a bit of strategy without all the dull stuff that comes with it, then this is easily your best bet.

Euro'96

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£44.99
RATING	★★★★★

At last, the Saturn has a great footie title to its name. Sure, it's taken a while, but you can now relax in complete footie luxury. In terms of timing, Sega couldn't have got it better – this title is sure to receive loads of attention while the Euro tournament takes place, and luckily, they've got just about everything right with the game. And so they should do too – this was converted from the Playstation Christmas hit, Actua Soccer, and since then, the programmers have taken the title back to the drawing board to make more changes to the gameplay. The result is brilliant – this easily outclasses FIFA on the Saturn, and in addition to the superb gameplay, the game looks great too. There's multi-angled play, tons of bits and pieces to fiddle around with and a really easy play system. If you're into football, there's no two ways about it you absolutely have to buy this game.





Discworld

BY	SEGA/PSYGNOSIS
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★★☆☆

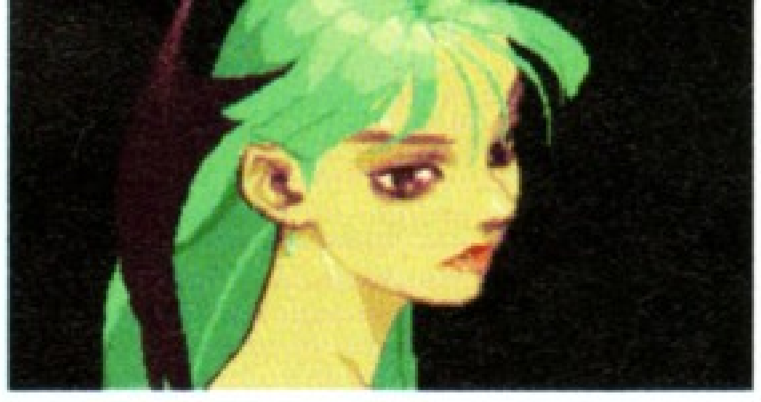
Terry Pratchett's Discworld books have always been popular with the anorak contingency, so it's a fairly natural progression for him to turn his talents to a video game. This adventure is another Discworld episode and features the trials and tribulations of Wizard Rincewind who with the help of various objects strewn around the place must go in search of, and slay a dragon. In addition to a script form Pratchett himself there's a star-studded voicepover cast including Eric Idle, John Pertwee and Tony Robinson (Baldrick out of Black Adder).

The game is [played out mainly as an RPG with the emphasis placed on talking to characters and picking objects up, although it's not an RPG like Mystaria where there's huge great battle scenes or anything. It's more story oriented here and mainly focuses around static gameplay scenes with a few moving characters/objects that can be used to firther your adventures. Plus, the emphasis is very much on the humour of the title and in this department, much use has been made of the "stars" employed to do the voiceovers. However, although the voices work very well, the action is sometimes a bit stale and the graphics are a bit poor considering that so much relies on the voices. But if you're a particular fan of Pratchett or you like a more involving play, then this could be up your street.











OUT NOW

Night Warriors
Darkstalkers' revenge

BY	VIRGIN
PRICE	£44.99
RATING	★★★★★

Fighting games continue to hog the limelight, and this month is no exception, as Darkstalkers proves to be another excellent combat title from Capcom. And being from Capcom, it's one of those heavy-on-the-special-moves formulas that's always worked so well for them in the past.

Darkstalkers is no exception, but the difference with this coin-op conversion is that instead of superheroes or streetfighter characters, you get a load of cartoony type monsters, which inevitably makes the action pretty slapstick stuff. As is par for the combat course, there's a bizarre theory behind each of the characters, but essentially, the story revolves around hunters and the hunted, so there's a pretty wide variety of characters on offer. As for the gameplay, well, it's all pretty top-notch stuff. This is a pretty much straight conversion from the arcade game with plenty of massive combo potential, spoof supermoves and a general comedy feel about it. There's no doubt that this holds its own when compared to the more serious Capcom titles such as Streetfighter Alpha, and if you're looking to make a choice between the three, this should place very highly on the scale – it's more a case of whether you have a sense of humour or not. But, either way, this is absolutely brilliant and an essential purchase for any combat fan.






It's Darkstalkers and it's another great game that's out now!

Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3

BY	GT INTERACTIVE
PRICE	£44.99
RATING	★★★★★

Blimey. This series just keeps getting better and better. after the tragedy that was Mortal Kombat II on the Saturn, most MK fans could be forgiven for turning their backs on the title forever, but luckily, this version more than puts the record straight. Actually, this version is even better, because it includes absolutely everything from the arcade version – something that didn't happen in the Playstation version.

Although this doesn't necessarily employ any huge game-breaking technical impressery, what it does offer is coin-op perfect gameplay with more characters than present in the other versions. Plus of course, you get all the ridiculous animalities and babalities that have become something of a trademark for the MK series.

There's no doubt that anyone who's ever bought an MK game will absolutely have to rush out and buy this game, as it's by far the best version yet, and obviously, the only one worth considering on the Saturn. Sure, there's no clever polygon stuff going on and if you want to get picky about it, nothing's really changed much over the years, but then, that's what MK is all about – it's almost like being in the Masons or something. Those looking for a more technically awesome title may find it better to shop around a little more, but for sheer gameplay, it doesn't get much better than this.




And for my next trick ladies and gentlemen, I will attempt to transform my underpants into the Eiffel Tower!

CD FILMS/MUSIC

To play any of these titles, you'll need a **video cd card**, costing £170. See your retailer for more details.



COMPACT disc DIGITAL VIDEO

COMPACT disc DIGITAL AUDIO GRAPHICS

MOONRAKER

BY	PHILIPS	PRICE	£14.99	RATING	★★

Despite the fact that Moonraker is one of the least impressive Bond films, it was the most successful at the cinema. This was partly to do with the fact that the plot saw Roger Moore blasting off into space in what resembled NASA's Space Shuttle, cashing in on the thrill of new technology. All the usual Bond stuff is there but it looks tired and predictable. Jaws even turns into a good guy! Bond retentives may feel they ought to own it but it should put everyone else firmly in the Connery camp.



THUNDERBALL

BY	PHILIPS	PRICE	£14.99	RATING	★★★★

The second of our Bond movies this month sees the more swarthy and convincing Sean Connery back in the Bond tuxedo. This is much more like it with sinister underwater goings-on traced to a mysterious organisation known as SPECTRE. Plenty of pace and panache, Thunderball is vintage 007. It's even got the all-important casino scenes where Bond swans about sipping Martini's, winning roulette, and picking up dangerous women in his own unimpeachable style.



PINK FLOYD: PULSE

BY	PMI	PRICE	£14.99	RATING	★★★

Pink Floyd still have considerable pulling power as far as bands go, although it tends to concentrate among the more follicly challenged generations. Pulse is taken from their '94 concert at Earl's Court, and in the manner to which Floyd fans have become accustomed, it features no end of lights, holograms, inflateables and other special effects likely to make Jean Michele Jarre curse his technical engineers. As for the music, who cares, so long as all the bulbs are working.



SURF O' ZONE

BY	DDE	PRICE	£19.99	RATING	★

Surf O'Zone is a look at those crazy high-adrenalin, peace-loving dudes that take to the breakers in search of spiritual nivarna. What you get is a product that's got all the depth of the paddling pool. Surf airheads yap away with the usual mixture of cheap mysticism and commercial cool, and a surfing company known as Team O'Neill seize the opportunity to indulge in as much self-advertising as possible. Just about the only redeeming feature in Surf O'Zone is the music.



ALSO OUT NOW

ALONE IN THE DARK 2:JACK'S BACK	£39.99	★★★	JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE	£44.99	★	SIM CITY 2000	£39.99	★★★★
BAKU BAKU ANIMAL	£29.99	★★★★★	JVC VICTORY BOXING	£44.99	★★★★	STREETFIGHTER THE MOVIE	£39.99	★★★
BUG	£49.99	★★★★★	MAGIC CARPET	£44.99	★★★★	THEME PARK	£44.99	★★★★
CLOCKWORK KNIGHT	£39.99	★★	MANSION OF HIDDEN SOULS	£39.99	★★★	TIME WARNER'S VIRTUA RACING	£44.99	★★★
CLOCKWORK KNIGHT 2	£39.99	★★★★	MORTAL KOMBAT II	£39.99	★★	TITAN WARS	£39.99	★★
CYBERIA	£39.99	★★★	MYSTARIA	£39.99	★★★	TOH SIN DEN	£44.99	★★
CYBER SPEEDWAY	£39.99	★★★★	MYST	£44.99	★★★	TRUE PINBALL	£39.99	★★★
D	£39.99	★★★★	NHL HOCKEY	£44.99	★★★★	WING ARMS	£39.99	★★★
DARIUS GAIDEN	£29.99	★★★★	NFL QUARTER BACK	£39.99	★★★★	WIPEOUT	£39.99	★★★★★
DAYTONA USA	£49.99	★★★★★	NBA JAM TE	£39.99	★★★★	WORLD CUP GOLF	£39.99	★★★★
DEFCON 5	£44.99	★★	PANZER DRAGOON	£49.99	★★★★	WORLD SERIES BASEBALL	£39.99	★★★★
DIGITAL PINBALL	£39.99	★★	PANZER DRAGOON 2	£49.99	★★★★★	WORMS	£39.99	★★★★
FIFA '96	£39.99	★★★★	PEBBLE BEACH GOLF	£39.99	★★★	VALORA VALLEY GOLF	£39.99	★★★
FIRESTORM	£44.99	★★★★	RAYMAN	£44.99	★★★	VICTORY GOAL	£39.99	★★
GALACTIC ATTACK	£39.99	★★★	REVOLUTION X	£39.99	★	VIRTUA COP	£44.99	★★★★★
GEX	£39.99	★★★	ROBOTICA	£39.99	★★	VIRTUA FIGHTER	£49.99	★★★★
GOLDEN AXE	£39.99	★★★	SEGA RALLY	£44.99	★★★★★	VIRTUA FIGHTER 2	£49.99	★★★★★
HANG ON 95	£39.99	★★★	SHELLSHOCK	£44.99	★★★	VIRTUA FIGHTER REMIX	£39.99	★★★★
HEBEREKE'S POPOITO	£39.99	★★	SHINOBI -X	£49.99	★★★	X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM	£49.99	★★★★★

COIN OPERATED

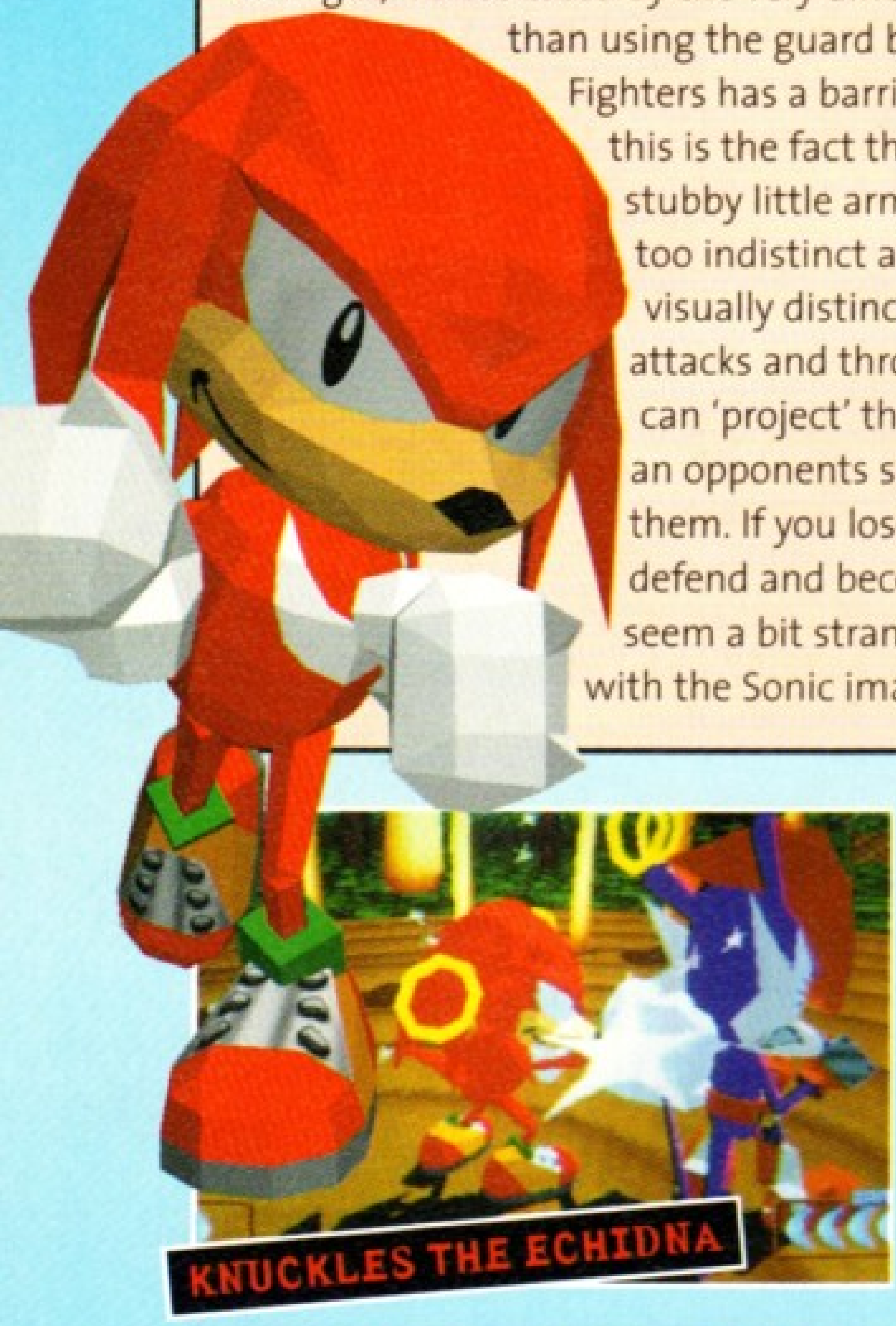
Since the news of Sonic The Fighters first hit the headlines, information has been a bit thin on the ground. That's mainly because it's still in development at AM2's headquarters. But, being the curious and determined types we are, we've managed to get hold of some more info and over the next two pages we introduce you to all the characters and get a taste of their fighting skills.

BEATEN



VF2 THIS 'AINT

As you all probably know by now, Sonic The Fighters uses basically the same control system as VF2 (with a joystick and three buttons). But there are some changes, necessitated by the very different fighters in the two games. Rather than using the guard button familiar to VF2 players, Sonic The Fighters has a barrier button instead. The main reason for this is the fact that all of the Sonic characters have stubby little arms, something that makes blocking look too indistinct and confusing. So in its place there's a visually distinctive barrier which blocks an opponents attacks and throwing moves. In each match the player can 'project' their barrier five times. Should you suffer an opponents special attack however you lose one of them. If you lose them all you're no longer able to defend and become a bit of a mess really. This might seem a bit strange but AM2 feel that it's more in keeping with the Sonic image and they'd know I suppose.



KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA





Hey! Leave Espio alone! I dunno, that Knuckles, he's always causing trouble. Been like that ever since he got his own game.



BARK THE POLAR BEAR





Bet you never thought ducks could be so hard. But they are, because I saw a few fighting in the park. It was pretty nasty.

Unfortunately though, the Duck's advances are nothing in comparison to the might of a fearsome chameleon. At least I think that's what's going on.





MILES TAILS PROWER





THE RINGS ARE BACK!

Missing those lovable Sonic rings eh? Well don't worry because they turn up in Sonic The Fighters as well. Each time a fighter takes damage, rings are sent flying from their body all over the arena, and the health bar moves down a notch or two. The reason AM2 introduced this idea is because they felt it would make it easier for beginners to judge they kind of kicking they're taking rather than pass glances at the health bar every few seconds. It also opens up the possibility of using the rings to restore health or act as additional barriers - something that AM2 are exploring at the moment.

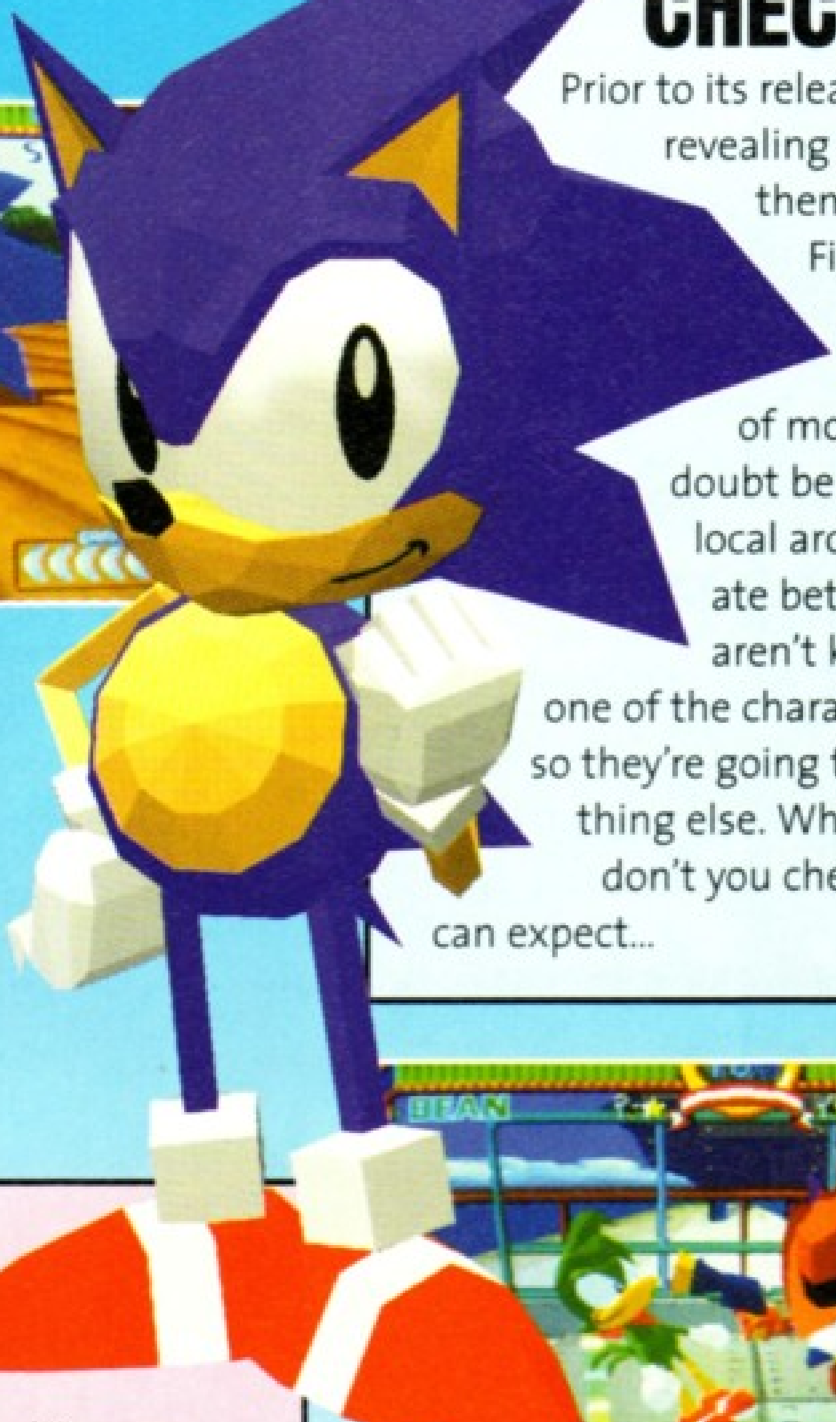
Yaay! Kick 'em in Sonic! Put the boot in! Slay that ridiculous character! Er...



But don't hurt Amy Rose!



SONIC THE HEDGEHOG



BLUE!

CHECK OUT THE MOVES!

Prior to its release, AM2 have decided to tease the expectant masses by revealing some of the moves characters can pull off. A lot of them are quite amusing and it's clear that Sonic The Fighters takes a comic look at the art of combat, using some ingenious 3D morphic effects to create some real slapstick fighting routines. There are of course loads of moves which are yet to be discovered and there'll no doubt be more surprises before Sonic Fighters makes it into your local arcade. One thing still to be decided is how to differentiate between the characters when Sonic takes on Sonic. AM2 aren't keen to simply change the colour of one of the characters (who'd want a green Sonic!), so they're going to have to come up with something else. While they think about that, why don't you check out some of the moves you can expect...





I haven't seen any pictures of him before. He looks like a sort of baddie version of Tails. Perhaps it's his evil half-brother.

FANG THE SNIPER





ON THE FENCE

You'll notice from the screenshots that all of the arenas in Sonic The Fighters have fences of one kind or another. You may well think that this makes it similar to Fighting Vipers and in some respects it does. However, AM2 are working to make these perimeter walls useful in terms of avoiding attack (by climbing them) and plan to introduce a whole range of techniques utilising the perimeter fence. You can see one of them already in the shape of Sonic's use of the ropes in the Green Hill Zone arena.



ESPIO THE CHAMELEON





BEAN THE DYNAMITE





THE BOSSES

Like all one-on-one fighting game Sonic The Fighters comes with that all important bosses to take on once you've pummelled all computer opposition. First up is Metal Sonic, the mid-level boss created by 'Dr. Eggman' and who takes on the role of Sonic's arch-enemy. Should you succeed in overcoming him it's time to face Dr. Eggman himself, evil genius and the game's final boss. Unfortunately we haven't got any pictures of either of these yet but as soon as we do you'll be the first to know.

AMY ROSE







DEAD OR ALIVE
デッドオアアライブ



TECMO IN A GOOD GAME SHOCKER!!!

What is this?! Is it true that Tecmo, the creators of the playable, yet ultimately shallow World Cup '90, have the next VF of the arcades? It seems that way if preliminary reports are anything to go by – and the game's only 50% complete. Let us take you further into the Tecmo zone....





BASIC GAMING JAPERIES

This is the first time that Sega have allowed a third party developer to make use of their world famous Model 2 board, and the resulting graphics in Dead or Alive are nothing short of stunning. Our overseas editor went to see Tecmo at their Japanese offices and found that AM2, the producers of the Model 2 board, have no say in how the board will be used by Tecmo, so any jibes about Dead or Alive being just another VF clone are just not true. As with most 3D games, Tecmo used computer aided motion capture to make the characters' actions as realistic as possible. Several stunt men and at least one famous Japanese actor auditioned to get the parts, and it has paid off really well in terms of character movement!



I'M A CONTROL FREAK!

So what makes this game unique compared to the other 3D giants like the legendary VF and Fighting Vipers? Well, rather than jump on the VF band wagon and opt for the simple punch, kick, and guard button, Tecmo have chosen to have a three button control of punch, kick, and HOLD! Aieee! What will life be like without the now standard block button? For a start, conventional blocking is out of the window, along with it the defensive/passive game of old. Instead, Dead or Alive offers a game where there's action all the time – as pressing the hold button when an opponent attacks results in your fighter grabbing the assailant's limbs. And, after much skillful button pressing, sinew tearing and grappling, the standard fight will be resumed. Unless that is, your opponent reverses the hold and does it back on you! So, the action will be extremely intense, adding to the VF formula of floating attacks along with Tekken-esque multi hold attacks.

EXPLOSIVE BOUNDARIES

We've had ring outs and no boundaries fighting, but in DOA, there's a fighting ring with explosives set around the confines of the arena. Should you get pushed into one of these danger areas, prepare to take high damage in the form of huge limb-tearing explosions! As long as no cheap ring outs can be executed, this unique feature is sure to be a great addition to the beat 'em up formula.

As we already mentioned, Dead or Alive is a Model 2 game, and that can only mean one thing for Saturn owners - a conversion is on the books! The game is not due to make its debut until this summer, but Sega and Tecmo are confident enough that the game will have a pretty big following when it's finally released, and consequently, a Saturn conversion is already being planned. Hopefully we'll be able to bring you more on this one next month.



So they reckon this isn't a rip off of Virtua Fighter? Well, you could have fooled me.








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VISA
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next Month



It's shaping up into a real summer of sport, what with Euro '96 and, of course, the Olympics in Atlanta. Taking in the flavour of the latter, next month sees some extensive coverage of DECATHLETE, Sega's all-new athletics sim.



You can also expect to see EXCLUSIVE reviews of NiGHTS and VIRTUA FIGHTER KIDS, loads more on BUG TOO! and ALIEN TRILOGY, plus all the regulars that fill out Saturn Mag's distinguished and portly frame.



So, until the August issue games guzzlers, stay mellow!

ISSUE 10 GOES ON SALE JULY 20TH! RESERVE YOUR COPY PRONTO!

Bonjour News Vender!
I stand in awe of that exemplary publication they call SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE. Would you do me the kind favour of reserving a copy I may read at leisure. A thousand thanks, and may the tills in your fine establishment keep ringing!

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We regret that we cannot answer enquiries personally.

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COMING SOON ON THE SATURN



Space Hulk
DUE JULY



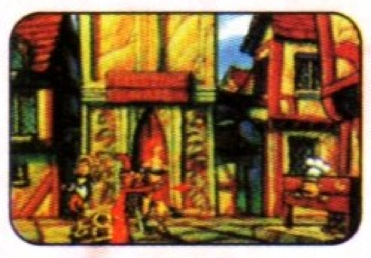
3D Lemmings
DUE JULY



Night Warriors
DUE AUGUST



Die Hard Trilogy
DUE AUGUST



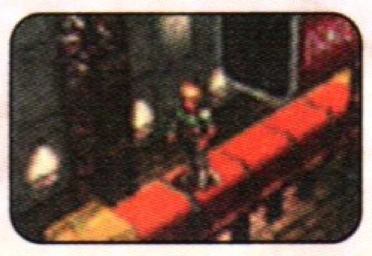
Discworld
DUE AUGUST



Dungeon Keeper
DUE AUGUST



Need for Speed
DUE JULY



Dark Saviour
DUE OCTOBER

SATURN RELEASE LIST

FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF *PROVISIONAL* RELEASE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING RELEASES. PLEASE REMEMBER THESE ARE INTENDED AS A GUIDE ONLY AND WE CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CHANGES OR DELAYS.

Baku Baku Animal	July
Blam! Machinehead	Mid June
Dawn of Darkness	21st June
Deadly Skies	June
Destruction derby	August
Doom	September
Guardian Heroes	Mid June
Hexen	August
Legend of Thor	Early June
Loaded	June
Mortal Kombat 3	End May
Need for Speed	5th July
Road Rash	28th June
Shining Wisdom	Mid June
Shockwave Assault	14th June
Spycraft	August
Tunnel B1	28th June
Viper	28th June
Waterworld	28th June

SATURN GAMES

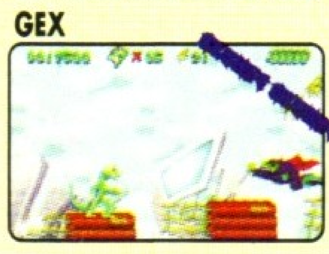
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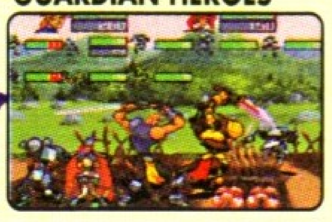
FI CHAMPIONSHIP



GEX



GUARDIAN HEROES

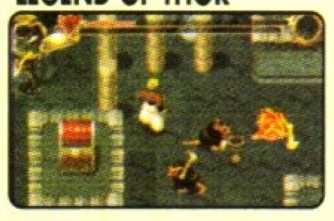


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HI OCTANE



LEGEND OF THOR



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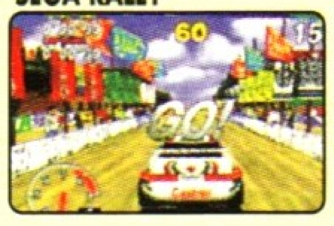
PANZER DRAGOON ZWEI



ROAD RASH



SEGA RALLY

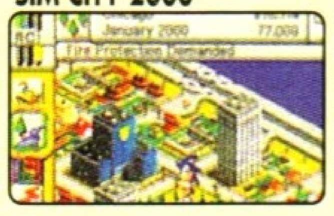


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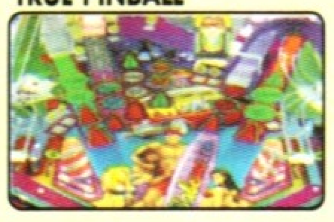
STREETFIGHTER ALPHA



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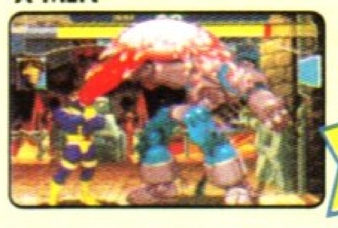
VIRTUA COP



WIPEOUT



X-MEN



SATURN TOP TEN

1. XMEN
2. PANZER DRAGOON 2
3. WIPEOUT
4. DAYTONA USA
5. SEGA RALLY
6. EURO '96
7. VIRTUA COP & GUN
8. VALORA VALLEY GOLF
9. FIFA '96
10. F1 CHALLENGE

Compiled from gameplay sales 1/5/96-21/5/96

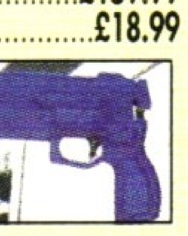
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